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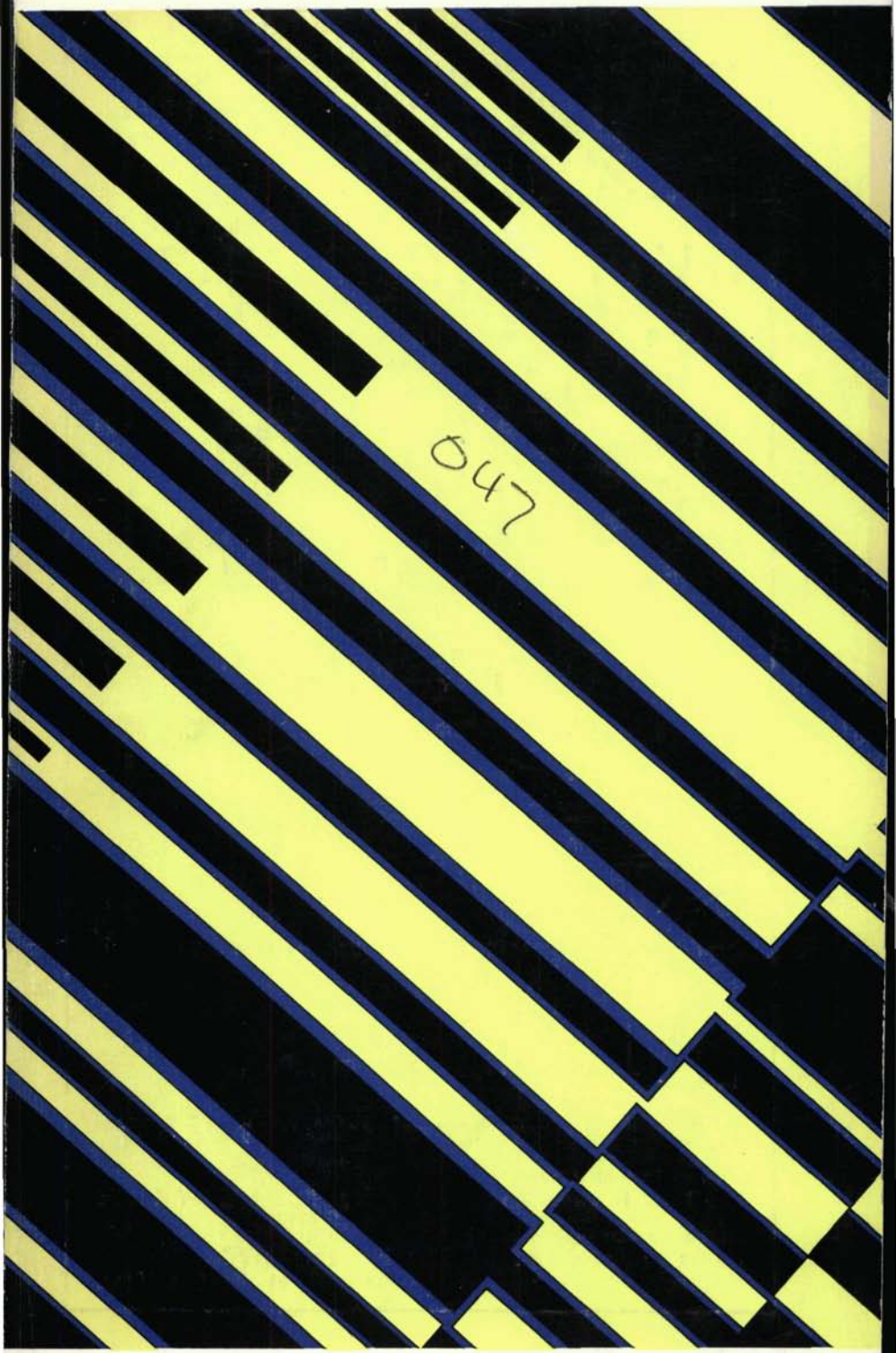

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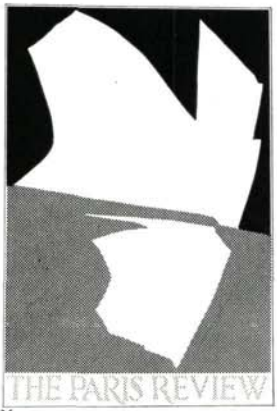

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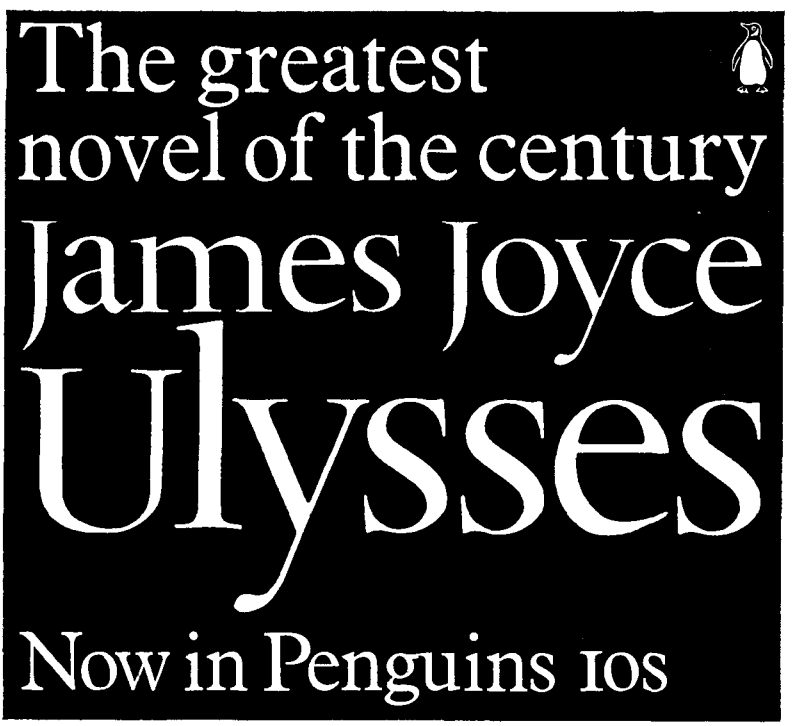

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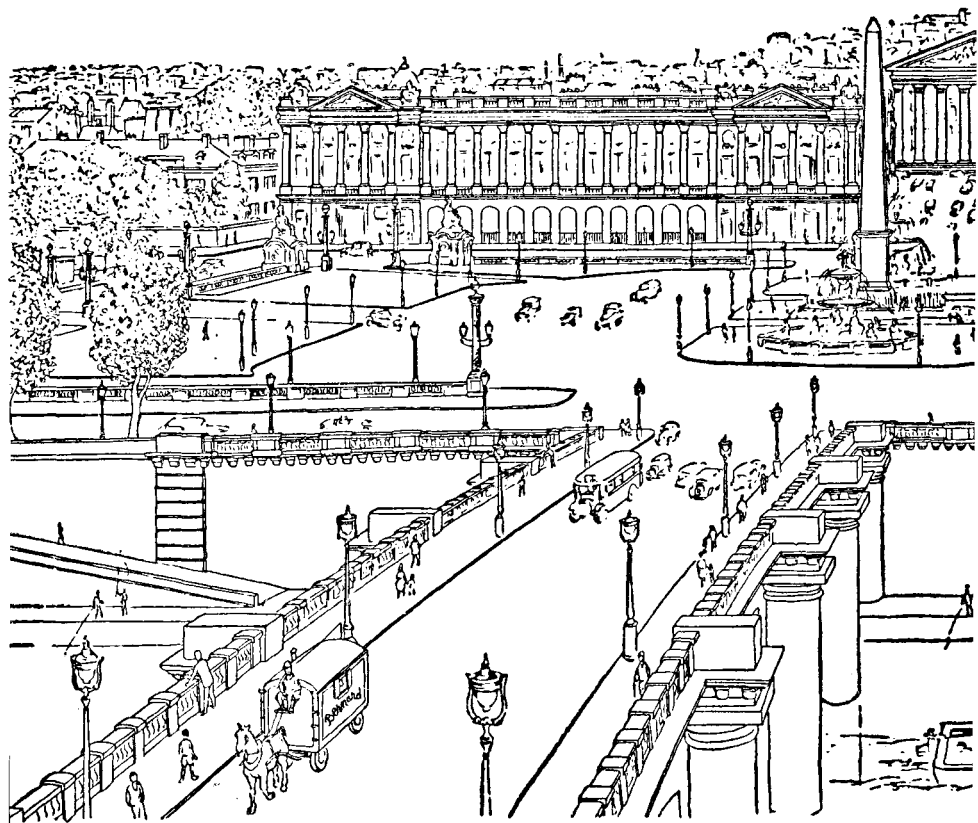

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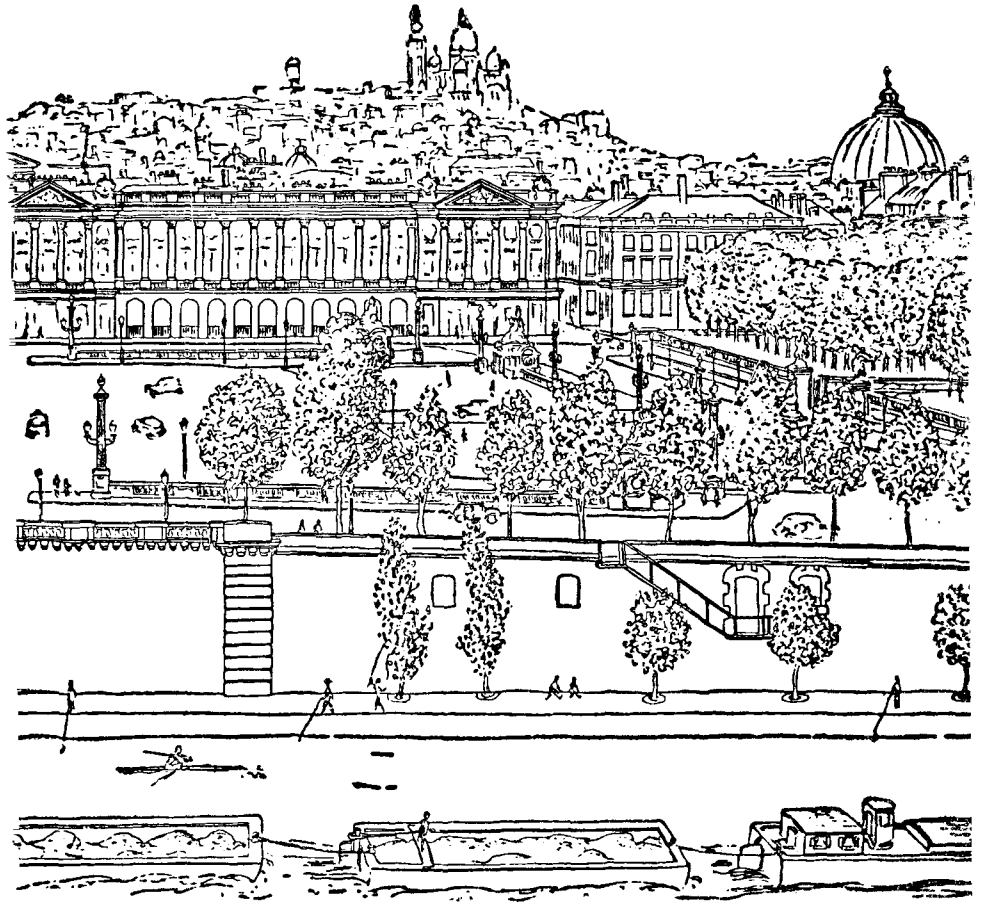

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John Ashbery

Plainness in Diversity

Silly girls your heads full of boys
There is a last sample of talk on the outer side
Your stand at last lifts to dumb evening
It is reflected in the steep blue sides of the crater
So much water shall wash over these our breaths
Yet shall remain unwashed at the end. The fine
Branches of the fir tree catch at it, ebbing.
Not on our planet is the destiny
That can make you one.

To be placed on the side of some mountain
Is the truer story, with the breath only
Coming in patches at first, and then the little spurt
The way a steam engine starts up eventually.
The sagas purposely ignore how better off it was next day,
The feeling in between the chapters, like fins.
There is so much they must say, and it is important
About all the swimming motions, and the way the hands
Came up out of the ocean with original fronds,
The famous arrow, the girls who came at dawn
To pay a visit to the young child, and how, when he grew up
to be a man
The same restive ceremony replaced the limited years between
Only now he was old, and forced to begin the journey to the
sun.

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The Task

They are preparing to begin again:
Problems, new pennant up the flagpole
In a predicated romance.

About the time the sun begins to cut laterally across
The western hemisphere with its shadows, its carnival echoes
The fugitive lands crowd under separate names.
It is the blankness that succeeds gaiety, and Everyman must
depart
Out there into stranded night, for his destiny
Is to return unfruitful out of the lightness
That passing time evokes. It was only
Cloud-castles, adept to seize the past
And possess it, through hurting. And the way is clear
Now for linear acting into that time
In whose corrosive mass he first discovered how to breathe.

Just look at the filth you've made,
See what you've done.
Yet if these are regrets they stir only lightly
The children playing after supper,
Promise of the pillow and so much in the night to come.
I plan to stay here a little while
For these are moments only, moments of insight,
And there are reaches to be attained,
A last level of anxiety that melts
In becoming, like miles under the pilgrim's feet.

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Soonest Mended

Barely tolerated, living on the margin
In our technological society, we were always having to be rescued
On the brink of destruction, like heroines in *Orlando Furioso*
Before it was time to start all over again.
There would be thunder in the bushes, a rustling of coils,
And Angelica, in the Ingres painting, was considering
The colorful but small monster near her toe, as though wondering whether forgetting
The whole thing might not, in the end, be the only solution.
And then there always came a time when
Happy Hooligan in his rusted green automobile
Came plowing down the course, just to make sure everything was O.K.,
Only by that time we were in another chapter and confused
About how to receive this latest piece of information.
Was it information? Weren't we rather acting this out
For someone else's benefit, thoughts in a mind
With room enough and to spare for our little problems (so they began to seem),
Our daily quandary about food and the rent and bills to be paid?
To reduce all this to a small variant,
To step free at last, minuscule on the gigantic plateau—
This was our ambition: to be small and clear and free.
Alas, the summer's energy wanes quickly,
A moment and it is gone. And no longer
May we make the necessary arrangements, simple as they are.
Our star was brighter perhaps when it had water in it.

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Now there is no question even of that, but only
Of holding on to the hard earth so as not to get thrown off,
With an occasional dream, a vision: a robin flies across
The upper corner of the window, you brush your hair away
And cannot quite see, or a wound will flash
Against the sweet faces of the others, something like:
This is what you wanted to hear, so why
Did you think of listening to something else? We are all talkers
It is true, but underneath the talk lies
The moving and not wanting to be moved, the loose
Meaning, untidy and simple like a threshing floor.

These then were some hazards of the course,
Yet though we knew the course *was* hazards and nothing else
It was still a shock when, almost a quarter of a century later,
The clarity of the rules dawned on you for the first time.
They were the players, and we who had struggled at the game
Were merely spectators, though subject to its vicissitudes
And moving with it out of the tearful stadium, borne on
shoulders, at last.
Night after night this message returns, repeated
In the flickering bulbs of the sky, raised past us, taken away
from us,
Yet ours over and over until the end that is past truth,
The being of our sentences, in the climate that fostered them,
Not ours to own, like a book, but to be with, and sometimes
To be without, alone and desperate.
But the fantasy makes it ours, a kind of fence-sitting
Raised to the level of an esthetic ideal. These were moments,
years,
Solid with reality, faces, namable events, kisses, heroic acts,
But like the friendly beginning of a geometrical progression
Not too reassuring, as though meaning could be cast aside
some day
When it had been outgrown. Better, you said, to stay cower-
ing
Like this in the early lessons, since the promise of learning
Is a delusion, and I agreed, adding that

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Tomorrow would alter the sense of what had already been learned,
That the learning process is extended in this way, so that from this standpoint
None of us ever graduates from college,
For time is an emulsion, and probably thinking not to grow up
Is the brightest kind of maturity for us, right now at any rate.
And you see, both of us were right, though nothing
Has somehow come to nothing: the avatars
Of our conforming to the rules and living
Around the home have made—well, in a sense, "good citizens" of us,
Brushing the teeth and all that, and learning to accept
The charity of the hard moments as they are doled out,
For this is action, this not being sure, this careless
Preparing, sowing the seeds crooked in the furrow,
Making ready to forget, and always coming back
To the mooring of starting out, that day so long ago.

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A Day I'll Never Forget

Mitchell Sisskind

My father was not really an unusual man but he was, after all, more than eighty years old. My wife and I had to learn to live with the various problems of having him around and with his little eccentricities, brought on by his age. But we did just that, and without too much difficulty. Or so we thought. And then it happened.

Perhaps I should introduce myself. My name is Jim Norcross, and I am an engineer with one of the big aerospace corporations on the West Coast. Sally and I were married while we were both still in college, eleven years ago this spring. We have two children—boys, Jim Jr. and Paul—in the second and fourth grades. Naturally we're pretty proud of them, but I guess they're really not much different from most kids their age. All either of them can think about is the Rams.

Well, I was at the plant one morning when I received a message that Sally had tried to call me—I'd been out of the office at the time—and had left word for me to get in touch with her as soon as possible. Now it just so happened that on that particular day I was exceptionally busy. The company was angling for a big government order, and a couple of fellows had flown out from Washington to look things over. So it was up to me, of course, to spend the morning and half the afternoon showing them around. Anyway, to make a long story short, it was three o'clock before I got a chance to call Sally. There was no answer. Oh well, I thought, it couldn't have been too serious or she

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would have tried to get me again; I figured she was out for a walk with dad. Anyhow, it would keep. Little did I know.

By quitting time I had forgotten all about Sally's call. Come five o'clock, Steve Kaleta—my boss—and I were sitting around in my office, and you might say that we were feeling pretty good. The two guys from Washington couldn't give us the final word, of course, but there was no denying that they seemed pleased. Steve suggested we have one or two for the road before heading for home, and, well, we got to talking. It turned out to be close to seven when I finally got out of the parking lot.

As you've probably heard, driving in California, especially Southern California, especially on the freeways, especially on a wet Friday evening not too long after the big rush hours... it can be a pretty frustrating, maddening experience. I had been on the road about twenty minutes when I found myself in a jam, apparently caused by an accident farther up. It was the kind of a damp, misty night when the windshield gets just wet and dirty enough so the wipers don't do anything but smear it. And there I sat, listening to the radio, watching the flashing red lights on the police cars, far away, through the filthy window. All of a sudden, like I always do when I get bored, I found myself thinking of Sally. It sure didn't seem like we had been married ten years, going on eleven. Sometimes, driving home, I'd still get that feeling I had the night I went to pick her up for the first time, when she was the "sweater girl" on campus, and I was a nobody. It sounds funny now, I guess. But man, she could make your eyes pop out... and then I remembered the phone call. The poor kid, I thought, I wish I'd gotten a chance to talk to her. Well, I promised her an extra kiss, and thinking about that made the time pass.

Now on a typical night, with—pardon the expression—normal traffic conditions, the plant is about forty-five minutes from the house. Tonight, I figured, it would come to about twice that. Still, there was some compensation. When at long last I rolled past the accident I caught a glimpse of the owner of one of the cars and—I couldn't have been mistaken, that bald pate could belong to no one else—it was Otto Preminger. I made a mental note to tell Sally and the boys.

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It was about eight-thirty when I finally rounded the corner down the block from my house. Lo and behold, my driveway was jammed with cars, strange cars... police cars too! I left the car in the middle of the street, ran across the lawn and through the front door. My living room was packed full of people.

A fat cop stopped me. "All right, pal," he said. "Okay..."

"Just a minute!" I told him. "This is my house, I live here! What's going on? Where's Sally?" I guess I expected him to figure out who Sally was.

The cop could see I was telling the truth; his face softened. "Oh. I'm sorry, sir," he said. "Your wife is waiting for you in the other room."

We started to fight our way across the living room. The place was absolutely jammed with police and newsmen, and the floor was covered with wires. "Make a hole!" grunted my escort, knifing through the mob with that belly. It took us a good three minutes to get across the room.

But then, in the bedroom, talking quietly with a single detective, I saw Sally. She heard me enter, came running, and buried her face in my shoulder. "Oh Jim, I thought you'd never get here!" she said; she was sobbing. "They said not to answer the phone..."

"Darling," I said, trying to appear calm, "what's happened? What is it?" But she couldn't stop sobbing. For a while we just stood there; I thought she might be able to cry herself out of it. "Listen, dear," I said softly, "whatever it is, we'll face it together, and we'll beat it. My little mouse..."

And then, suddenly, she said it. "Oh Jim!" she cried. "It's dad! It's dad!"

I must have given a little start, because she looked up at me for a second, and then burst into tears again. "He's dead," she moaned.

My dad. My father was dead. And you know, in a funny way I felt kind of relieved. It wasn't, after all, such a tragedy. He had certainly had a full life, Lord knows. A postman in his youth, my father had gone on to achieve real, if not spectacular success in business. But—cornball or not—he never really lost his "working stiff" perspective on things. He still loved the

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fights when times had passed them by, and his cigars, and he still had that funny way of urinating... but then it hit me: What were all those policemen doing in the house? And all those TV people? "Sally!" I said, and then louder, "Sally!"

She couldn't budge her head from my shoulder. "Jim," she said, "oh my God, Jim, the food...it..." But she couldn't go on. "Sally!" I nearly shouted, and pulled her head away, "What happened?" For a second she looked up into my face. "Jim," she whispered, "dear Jim, it just seemed...it just...it seemed to gobble him up..."

"What are you talking about?" I screamed. I felt as though I was going to black out. The detective laid a paw on my shoulder. I could see Sally trying to get hold of herself.

"Your father," she gulped. "Jim, it just ate him up. The food ...it just went to work on him..." And she broke down again.

In a few hours they were all gone, the police, and the news people. My mind was still trying to come to grips with the idea that there had been something horribly wrong with my father's food, that that something had allowed it to attack and... well, I still couldn't understand it. Maybe, I thought, I should just leave it to the boys in the police lab, but then again I couldn't get the whole thing out of my mind. I was in the living room—what a mess—and Sally was lying down in the bedroom. She had, of course, sent the boys to stay with the neighbor as soon as they'd come home from school. We could talk to them later.

I went into the bedroom and sat down on the foot of the bed. Sally was lying on her back, one arm thrown across her face. "Darling," I said quietly, "I love you. But I have to see it clearly. Please, try once more...to tell me exactly what happened." It was cool and dark in the bedroom. I hoped we could talk this thing out calmly.

"We were in the kitchenette," she began, her arm still across her eyes. "I put the food—eggs, toast, juice—down on the table in front of dad.He seemed in such a good mood, you know, less tired... then he asked for the salt, so I went out into the pantry. And when I came back in it had started..." I was afraid she would start crying again.

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"It's all right," I said. "It's all right, dear." I put my hand on her breast, and after a while felt her breathing grow more relaxed. The window was open a little, and I listened to the shade rustling quietly. She took her arm away from her face, and touched me. Well, still, both of us wanted sexual intercourse. It's all right, I thought, but we mustn't confuse pleasure with happiness.

Well, things are pretty much back to normal now. The boys, of course, have come home, and I went back to work recently after taking a week off. We've decided to say that dad passed away in a bathtub accident in order to explain the police and the newsmen. The TV boys, contrary to what you may have heard about them, were just terrific, and even broadcast our cover story. Maybe the neighbors wondered for a while, but they got over it. Of course, the police were very skeptical, and never could explain what happened. But since there was no evidence at all, they just called it a dead end.

And you know, it's funny to think anything good can come of a thing like this, but I think Sally and I—and me especially—are better people because of it. Human beings really know so little and they think they know so much, and now and then something like what happened to dad has to come along and sting us a little. So nowadays when I'm in the office, or when I'm driving, every once in a while I just stop and think for a minute or two, just stop and think. And Sally catches herself doing the same thing.

We thought of telling the truth to the boys, but in the end we decided against it. Why give them something to worry about for no reason at all, and maybe scare them needlessly? When I see how frightened they are just to take baths these days, I'm convinced the real story could do permanent harm. Anyway, as time goes on, the boys seem to be wondering about it less and less. It's the football season, after all. What could be more important than that?

Just a couple of nights ago, for instance, Jim Jr., my oldest, was reading the sports pages at the dinner table. Of course,

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when the boys grow up we won't allow the paper during meals. But while they're still learning to read, why not let them get as much practice as they want? "Boy oh boy," said Jimmy, "the Cleveland Browns make me want to up-chuck..."

"Say," I said, "I bet you fellas can't guess who I saw on my way home not too long ago, and his car was in an accident."

Little Paulie looked up from his food, but I couldn't budge Jim.

"Well," I said, "do you remember when we went to see *Exodus?*"

"Sure," said Paul. "I remember, sir." Of the two, Paul is by far the more polite.

"*Exodus,*" I said, "was directed by Otto Preminger, and..."

"Jim, no kidding..." Sally said. I still get a kick out of seeing her try to talk with her mouth full. "Otto Preminger?"

But Jim Jr. was still buried in my newspaper. I leaned over and poured a little water from my glass out onto his head, just to wake him up. That got him.

"Well, what do you think about it, son," I said, trying to sound serious. "Don't you listen when your father talks to you?"

"I think it's great, dad," said Jimmy. "What kind of car did Mr. Preminger have, anyway?"

You're sure you've got them, and then...well, all I know is you love your children very much.

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Robert Creeley

The Edge

Place it,
make the space

of it. Yellow,
that was a time.

He saw the stain of love
was upon the world,

a selvage, a faint
after edge of color, fading

at the edge of the world,
the edge beyond that edge.

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Tom Clark

Air

The sweetpeas, pale diapers
Of pink and powder blue, are flags
Of a water color republic.
The soft bed, turned back,
Is a dish to bathe in them.
This early in the morning
We are small birds, sweetly lying
In it. We have soft eyes,
Too soft to separate the parts
Of flowers from the water, or
The angels from their garments.

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Sky

The green world thinks the sun
Into one flower, then outraces
It to the sea in sunken pipes.
But twisting in sleep to poetry
The blood pumps its flares out
Of earth and scatters them. And
They become, when they shine on
Beauty to honor her, a part of
Her laconic azure, her façade.

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Ed Sanders

I don't give
a pound of
mule mucous
for any fucking
"Transformation Symbolism
in the Eucharist"

if you can't dance to it
or if it isn't dope
or possessed of a dick-sized
aperture

then shit on it

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I give up:
I bleed I must know.
Grant me the
gnosis. Kill me with
knowledge o ogdoad
that I may flail my
gill slits in a
structureless phylogenous
recapitulation. The
line of evolution
hangs like some wizened
scrotum on an arab donkey, to which
let us lift up the pale
articulations, to suck knowledge
from the plumed garden of Gnosis.
Come near gnostic worm,
with wiggle, with wig-waggle,
& feed on our livid kidneys,
spit up from our body tensions
a paste born from the rose wraith within.

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Charlie Vermont

My Father's Retirement Dinner

I keep circling the Triborough Bridge

Hell's Gate Bridge always with a line of freight cars

Randall's Island, my sister in red and gold cheerleader clothes
my father and I at the top of the stadium

South Bronx tenements
always the black basketball players in the cement playground
near the river under the bridge

I picture driving two Junes ago across it to Astoria Gardens
the Versailles type catering house
mirrored, chandeliered, plushed red, carpeted thick,
which hosted my father's retirement dinner.

For twenty-seven years he had worked for the NYC
Department of Public Works
retired as Chief of Sewer Construction for the entire shitting
city

I recall his picture in a magazine when he had finished
supervising the Bronx sewage treatment plant in the 50's
he once took me up on one of the tanks

I understand now his philosophical attitude
"We've lived here all our lives and we're going to die here"

The solid men were there who build things, sewers, roads,
bridges,
an ex-Commissioner of Air Pollution, an ex- Commissioner of
Public Works
a Commissioner of Public Works, engineers, engineers,
engineers

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gave speeches about themselves supposed to be about my father
seven men, seven endless speeches

There were the little Irish and the big Italians
clerks and miners and contractors who made a million
everytime they built a sewer

Honest Henry he must have been
think of all the graft there could have been in sewers
when the shit, if it does, comes pouring out flooding Manhattan
forty years later
who will know that men gave miserable speeches
at my father's retirement dinner

My father's speech basically an attack on Mayor Lindsay's
reforms
was like a Presidential fair-well address
in the style of Eisenhower, one of his heroes
with an ample quote from Admiral Rickover on expertise

Amasano, a tunnel expert, interrupted in stunted English
"Henry... Henry before you say anything else I think
you should ask Rose to take a bow"
My father so involved in his speech wrought so slowly
was in a moment of abstraction
then he asked my mother to take a bow

I was thinking of the shame and how I could make all this real
somehow
I formulated a speech
about men rising from the Lower East Side on Delancey Street
and working to support a family at eight years old
and not learning how to swim in the East River
because you had to jump off the piers and swim with the
floating shit
which my father had gotten rid of
and sent me to summer camp to learn how to swim

and his getting scholarshipped at Cooper Union
wanted to tell them about the day I walked around
depressed in the East Village and went into Cooper Union

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to take a shit and saw my father's name on an honor roll
and it made me feel good

talk of how many things had been invented since my father
was born
and the wars and the depression
and how everybody in the room, it had occurred to me, had
started poor
and had helped to build the monument yet monstrosity to
man
New York City
the United States
and Vietnam too
I wanted to make a speech with my long hair so they could all
feel good
I wanted to make the farce real
I wanted to give a speech
and then over Rickover I'm thinking what I should say
and my father says it
He turns to me and I'm with him and all the farce is there and
he says

When I was a young lad I used to have a great interest in
books (and he turns to me), though my son doesn't believe
it
these days, and on the lower east side where I grew up
there
were old stores which had all kinds of books and one day
in one of these stores I picked up a plaque with a poem on it
which since then has served as my motto
it says (and he looks at me and I'm eleven or eight or five
however when I first saw the plaque with sailboats on it
and he reads the poem to me)

We can't all play a winning game
Someone is sure to lose
Yet we can play that our name
No one may dare accuse.
That when the master referee
Scores against our name

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It won't be whether we've won or lost
But how we've played the game.
and I'm small and looking up at the plaque and I'm on my feet roaring
because that was between me and him and because that was right for him
in the context of respectability and because I had taken it for myself
on another level

It was everything he ever had to say to me and I reinterpreted it and I was small and roaring and cheering in front of all the builders of monuments and monstrosities
and he and I, we drove home over the Triborough Bridge, past the South Bronx tenements, Harlem and Hell's Gate.

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The Old Woman

Sarah Plimpton

I

On the edge of the leaf a line of light, of yellow light born over the green escaped over the side catch it with a finger and then a hand he brought it up to his eye and put it through, bouncing on the ground the uneven road cracked the direction and he followed into the garden transparent and shiny to the sun.

On the side of the eye, out of the corner bent over he saw the crooked bones pulled and pushed down toward the ground, the face had never seen the sky. An old woman dried leaves scattered in the air and blew around her feet shuffled past walking on his own, the soles stuck to the ground rubbing as she walked against the stones.

Deaf the face that turned sideways to pluck his mouth, her lips tightened and drew in the skin sucked in the breath her little tongue showing through, his eyes she left hers too small and buried deep too far in. Carried past I'd give you my own.

A cloud had covered the sun, the shadow went after her heels. Colored over and silent on the page. The seeds on the stalk in the meadow cracked open pushed out through the eye onto the table.

Blinded on the first day marching up the steps always calling out with a bunch of flowers in his hand to sell on the street tucked in his knees and settled on the ground. She wouldn't ask him for money. He emptied his pockets and smiled raking the lips off the teeth that cut into the ground. Furrows in the earth cracking open the face, seeds that filled the open grin and the fissures in the stone.

The flower picked he held it out his lovely smile turned

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sideways and underneath glowed by the side of hers and he saw the bent fingers uncurl and come out over the ground. The stem scraped along the skin and he closed his empty hand.

She rocked in her chair on the porch and he went each day the flowers in his hand.

I'm going now.

She nodded her head.

Your husband's dead?

He thought the sun had broken through the cloud. The crack split with the speed of the wind and the light fixed through the bars of the porch.

Shaken like dice and thrown out on the table. The numbers that came rolled up in the light.

Her face bent eagerly down. Shall I read them to you? My husband up to the top? At five he covered it with his hand swept them on the floor waiting for the merry tinkle of broken glass.

She laughed and laughed turning down to look. The clouds closed the bands of light were dark. Brittle he could break the bones in his fingers the legs were so thin.

He opened his mouth and lungs the air came whistling out all by himself when he left in the evening, the lights were being turned on down the street one by one and then over his head.

Funny boy. And he laughed, not fat like the rest. Turned over on his stomach rolling on the bones. And when he laughed the table fell silent uneasy they watched his face, his clever smile cut through the soup, the bright eyes shone, holding on tight tied up with a bow.

I heard you coming, he'd always said.

* * *

The spring came again and again flowered out over her head. Along the wall where the roses grew he cut them off one by one, breaking off the thorns.

She smiled and on the corner of her lip he saw a summer

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day crack through the fields the hot summer sun running on the tops of the grass while she did up her shoes. He put the flowers in a vase.

The wind blew the leaves from last fall across the field. They died down and spun up spinning around, their fingers spread out to break the fall. Turning over on their spines and spit out of his mouth. The dried up bones flaking off.

Her cheeks bloomed, the petal hidden behind the ear and under the skin buried deep. Brought out of the woods. On a sled in the snow, the tracks long and curved. Buried in blue.

A tool out of the toolshed.

Used to open the box. A round face within, a moon reflected in the bottom shone in his eyes through the mirror on the wall. A rock in the sky, enormous in back of the trees.

One eye centered at night through the window shone on the bed a white light striking out all the corners in the cold.

* * *

For you the world, she'd swing the world up to the end and back down the long track a pendulum in the clock over the head he saw the weight through the small glass window. Given the day of the week the weather boiled down until the pot was red hot and he opened the door. A layer of air from the day before at the top of the room the fresh underneath.

I'd have your name printed out.

Printed out?

On the door.

Blushed red the heat in his hand. The thin line on his lips swelled over his fist and wrapped it round.

Heard his name.

Not today, he shook his head.

Marching by and marching by the dust between his shoulders stuck to his back. Holding on and the road went around a curve. Struck by the light it came against the hill the sun glittered in the sky. A child marked the size of the field below and they turned the sprinklers on spreading in the furrows

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the water trembled in her eye shone from the ripple on the wind.

The hill climbed from the back with a northern exposure, the frozen sky was beginning to break the clouds and move.

* * *

Play, go out and play the blue sky came out and stayed he ran in the fields out to the end and watched the curve that came up the bottom so far away brightened by the sun. Hollow his bones in order to fly. His hand stretched out his eye, flowers in the field bloomed in the center rising for the sun over the trees.

Nailed to the head the light in the eye shot inside, and he rigged it down for going on.

The end of the day the end of the field the rabbit scared up lengthened along the row and turned the corner.

There's your face and where's the eye? And laughed his head had split the dome falling near his feet the blue scattered among the leaves the sky was black taken off the stars.

II

He had his time with the sunrise coming up brightening on a thin line under the cloud haze from the night. The shadows shortened on the grass held down. The leaves on the side and over the wall taken up by the light and given away. The grass was yellow against the sky.

When she laughed it was clear in the air cleared through the yellow heads moving with a noise dry in the air that came again. The shadow that ran it over came and went the rain he hardly heard the drops. The field was a darker yellow.

The brightness in the sky turning out.

The birds when she liked. Sang on the branch.

* * *

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Her smile. Curved the leaves out to the sun and her head came up with every dawn rising over the banks of green.

Drawing himself up to look into her eye through those fields he saw the sun through the night the stars glittered in his hands as far away as he could see her moon in the sky.

And looked again.

Lost interest, she'd turned away faced outward over the garden and the trees. For so you have grown. With such a small face.

She'd put her bird back in the cage and shut the door. Her song cut down to another day the pins were taken out around the hem.

Her laugh followed along the road. Where she turned and dropped below the horizon. Five for the price of one, the colors on her lip red and turned to blood.

* * *

On her face the landscape grew beyond his hand and spread through the eye with the trees in line on the side of the field the thick growth in the grass beside the stream a lighter green the blades flat the sky to take their place and turn them blue; metallic blue the color in the eye around the circle the clouds were colored white and drifting with the wind. Running along with the sky overhead his hands had touched the clouds and moving up they dissolved on his fingers raining through the transparent skin.

She knows where I am on the road and when he got to the sea and walked on the beach he opened the door the line on the horizon cut it in two. Her head was turning over the sill.

And when she laughed she had no teeth. The grass had grown around the edge.

* * *

Forgotten her name with a wind in his ears. The doors had banged shut, the windows had been open out on the fields, the trees were bending in and lashing back whipping the rain

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across the forest and down the stream. The wind on the leaves drove the water off beating the ripples off the green. The moving clouds low over the trees cutting down cleared the shrubs their shiny surface brighter green.

The wind slapped the glass against the wood she turned her head against the rain and a darker cloud straightened up the shadow in her eye, brought a newer gust and stronger drops across the dam.

Rising from the forest overhead making downwind he watched her fly until the dusk would blot her out. Altogether on the wing with the night between the trees and among the garden on her flowers. He combed his eyes to no more use straining for the light wasted in his head.

Blown out the land a different color taken over by the night the feathers from her wings plucked and left beside the path, the light breeze swayed the fluff and lifted it through the air those tiny feathers pulled from the flesh and left alone.

A bright sun had glittered on the fields freshly plowed packed and shined with countless mirrors sharp to cut the eye from his face putting it elsewhere planted like a seed. Growing up without the light to leave him blind his hand in the dark large and bright covered over the field with another sun. The wind increased warm in his throat.

Turning on the earth his heart was cold pumping on the sea reduced in his pockets.

In the window one long day from the top to the bottom if he opened it up and leaned on the sill.

Too young for her age, bone age. Running forward the door opened on the field where he came out from the eye crossing over the step swung easily on the hinge. Turned out by the spring.

And over the horizon.

To the edge of the sea.

The clouds rubbed out leaving a white streak on the surface of the water. Shining under the stars. Slackened.

And let out, the sea.

From his body.

Yours, your garden in the dusk the trees blackened one by

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one to disappear their shadows only left against the sky. No longer leafed, their shapes folded down and put away.

When from the side from her mouth he saw the laugh between her fingers cupped to her ear hearing it while they walked she listened to all her own.

* * *

On the road. The forest by his side. The leaves on the floor bending turning brown and breaking into sound.

Cried for the sun on the leaf and followed it on.

Laid on the ground hard in his back he felt the earth overhead green in the sun frost on the air the cold from his fingers running out and crushed red through the evening sky.

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Steve Carey

Hollywood, Spring, 1924

Zara Vanities, What do they see in each other?
It is the "soon" and "better" got them.
Feeling 'little quicker, new: A drama
Of beautiful women—lilies—who toil not.
But get thin. New thin... Clashing whites...
"Convent bred" in fuzzy arbors. Now leading,
Winning, Zara Vanities. Now says never knew fear,
Says "Terror" her last. And here
Is tiny Ina Ansen, the dancer, diving.
Diving into what? Oh, nothing, just diving!

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Charles Plymell

Blue Eyes

Ears at attention
Brooding majesty
Lesson in bargaining

With hope and fear
Mushroom and mosses
Tiny sun machines

Jigsaw puzzle is pieced together:
out steps a flute player.

"Does the wind always blow this way?"

And got the reply:
"No, sometimes it turns around
and blows the other way."

And so on and so on.

Buried the open-pit creatures of the sea.

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The Author

Script in hand
Stands revealed in Awesome Splendor.
Adult skull
Arms outflung
As in forgotten time
When night fell...
Shimmering vertebrae
Trapped between hunters and the rim
Green-spaghetti arms
Skeletal needles
Dark cloud of hair
Careful hands.
Grey snake on green path
Trash dump traces
Visitors besiege the writer's window:
Bright eyed
Glass models,
Iridescent pygmies
Marring the vanilla,
Yielded ingredients
For ice cream and tooth paste.
What is it? The grime of centuries
The stage for an awesome collapse?
Leaving the small boy in the center wide eyed and open-mouthed.
To dance, to sing, to play the guitar.
Warm glimmer: A new species?

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Robert Harris

The New Peloria

To love hard & febril disalligned, continually
disalligned almost disheartened fearing
disappointment in you or disgrace in lack
of seeming you drumble
primy your bones princeps & hunk
to look nearly to my felicity
I to your peine fellfold touching
But "mine are sweet thots in this wan country"
where dark night like a fuscous wound
you say & sweetness rolls from the tongue
seducing fatigue
gentle gentle we are
obmutescent naked intensest midrib & cannon
we hold & hazard obloquy for what reason?
I love
without reason & I do not speak for you
but about you
your bones & tresses & limpid sark
Do you think what
of this novation plangent not crying
you are singing & making honest

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bargains in the lit-up city rejecting & declining
to choose the kits foster a holster
tired unwelcome sad

I

want my legs around your hips
to peise the tasted orifice & orchid
you offer

irregardless & sensational

We are together
never really but in a plaisance
epatand & capsule ephemera
becoming our cachet of loveliness & cheerfulness
Perhaps you wild & queer to me
you are a cabochon & you eat me
to stave my love
Sunglare glancing to ramify love
your music what has no equal now in me
as enclaspt & trembling
I like the things I do not understand

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Multi

Paul Spike

Instructions

You will need a blank piece of paper about the size of this page. Also a pen or pencil.

Draw a circle of approximately one inch diameter in the center of your paper. Fill it in. This is your Speck and the sheet is now your Speck Sheet.

Near the bottom of your Speck Sheet, write a multi digit number, any number of digits you wish. This is now your Identification Number.

Now you must be screened. The process is quite simple. Merely press your Speck Sheet down against the Viewing Sheet (next page) for about one second. Make sure contact is firm and evenly distributed. Once this is done you will have been cleared and able to pass on through the Word Lock.

You may begin screening.

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VIEWING SHEET

(approximate speck position)

(approximate I.D. position)

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Congratulations!

Now you have successfully completed your screening and are free to proceed through the Lock.

Your speck is called *Chris*

Reminder:

You will not be needing your Speck Sheet again until your next trip through the Word Lock when screening will again take place. Please be careful not to fold or mutilate your sheet.

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This is Guide Voice. Your passage through the Word Lock was fine. At this time your particular speck necessitates this taped data:

Welcome. This is Guide Voice. Your journey through the Word Lock was fine. At this time you will receive some historical data which you may already be familiar with. If this is the case, please bear with us.

The period we are concerned with is chiefly the second and third centuries of Planet-Village. Centuries in which P-V reconsolidation and efforts at outright apluralism were of prime importance, a period in which the must crucial indust-transpo techniques were jettisoned for the EFBS, the Ex-perience Feeling Battery System.

Walter Westrum invented the Experience Battery in the year 179. With this piece of equipment a certain isolated experience could be contained within a zinc and lead battery, usually a D–cell battery in those pioneering days. Originally these batteries, the D-cells, were used for nothing but the most elemental electric charge. Once it was discovered that raw electricity could be "sculpted" through the ISO methods originated in the laboratory of Dr. Hauptman Bwemmerman, the invention of the Experience Battery was inevitable.

The Experience Battery revolutionized life on the P-V. Men became addicted to its use within a few decades. Indeed, it was so easily facilitated, one had simply to put the adhesive electrode from whatever battery one desired onto one's wrist or forehead and suddenly be swimming in the middle of the Mediterranean, eating a steak, making love, philosophiz-ing, even sleeping, whatever individual experience was possible for man could be isolated and contained. Several trends occupied the next hundred years or so.

First, the increasing refinement and gradation of experience which each battery could contain. Whereas once one had to settle for the relatively primative experience of eating beef steak via the Steak Battery, in fifty years it was possible to choose between Rare, Medium Rare, Medium, Medium Well, Well Done Steak Batteries. In a few more years,

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it was possible to select between American, Argentinian, Australian, Japanese and French Steak Batteries in each of the possible degrees of tenderness, seasoning, thickness and degree of doneness.

The second major trend of these years was the technique of Experience Mix. This was the manner in which individuals combined various Experience Batteries at one time so as to achieve a spectrum of almost limitless experience blends. The subtlety of life had never previously been evoked with such force. Not until men began to plant one hundred, even more, different electrodes in their skin. One could combine a Medium Well Japanese Steak with a Fine Chateau Margaux Vin Rouge Experience. And then combine this dining experience simultaneously with, perhaps, the Trick Water Ski Experience and the Sunset Over The Aegean Experience and the Shakespeare Henry The Fourth Part Two Experience and The Fellatio Experience and on and on until one had a tremendous collage of experience in one's body, so multi-faceted and so vivid it made life itself appear wan by comparison. In order to achieve greater and greater Experience Mix, a computer-warehouse machine was invented. This device could contain all of an individual's Experience Batteries and was pre-programmed to systematize these millions of cells into a flowing, ebbing and crescendoing Experience Mix within the mind. These machines were called Personality Homes. At first inordinately expensive, most of the citizenry continued to apply their Experience Batteries manually and achieve Experience Mix through a combination of luck and intuition. However, a way was soon found to greatly reduce the size of the batteries and subsequently the Personality Homes.

There came a moment when Experience Artists, as they now called themselves, discovered a new realm of experience, the Created Experience. The Created Experience Battery contained only synthetic, abstract experience. Experience which had no basis in physical existence but was derived completely from the range of pure consciousness. The Created Experience Battery was to the old Battery as a piece of helio-calcinite circuitry is to a hunk of raw meat. There

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soon arose a whole new industry devoted to the mass production of these "Created" Batteries. In some cases, technicians became so adept and popular that they would refuse to let their batteries be mass-produced. These hand-crafted, signed and numbered batteries would cost incredible sums. And likewise was the cost of the new series of Personality Homes which had to expand in order to accommodate the new batteries.

Almost seven years after the CEB revolution, the P-V social scientific team appointed ten years earlier released its first report on the nature of the men of the P-V. It was in this report that the term "speck" was instituted for the first time in place of the word "man."

Besides this report, there was appointed a new commission to study the future of the Battery System and to make suggestions on how the entire phenomenon might be standardized and channeled. The Commission on Experience released their report just two and a half years later. This document served to revolutionize the Planet-Village once more. Working hand in hand with Experience Artists and technical engineers, they devised a system which abolished the batteries themselves! Through the most advanced form of computer-teaming and programming, they had arrived at a new codification of all experience, both Natural and Created. A typical irony of science was this fact that the commission designed to assure the healthy future of the batteries actually did away with them completely.

The new code was as simple as the most basic relativity theorem. It gave to the specks of the Planet-Village a new life of freedom.

Quarks: these were the building blocks of the new life. These were the replacements for the countless Experience Batteries. Fifteen quarks replaced billions of Batteries.

The fifteen original quarks:

Sleep
Taste
Visual

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Audio
Touch
Smell
Emotion
Sexual
Political
Work
Intellect
Soul
Mother
Father
Miscellaneous

Each quark was the size of a grapefruit and was very similar in appearance to the original batteries. Each one weighed about three pounds and had a new super-adhesive electrode to avoid the unpleasantness of Disconnection. Within each quark was an entire realm of experience, Natural and Created. Now a speck could attach a quark electrode to his skin and be free to steer through the quark at will. This new freedom was perhaps the most revolutionary feature for the specks, having become completely submissive to the omnipotent domination of their Personality Homes.

A more detailed explanation is necessary. It was now possible to attach an Audio quark, for example, and then the speck could direct with his own "will" a path through all possible Audio experience, through all sound past and future. Obviously, a steering mechanism which tied directly into the "will" without direct electrode attachment to brain tissue was extremely complex, a miracle of engineering. One may ask how a speck, hooked into all of this Audio experience, could ever hope to isolate a particular sound or simple combination of sound frequencies? A sound as tiny as a popular tune or a piece of Spanish flamenco or perhaps a sonata of Mozart? Obviously, the ability to Isolate required an immense amount of trial and error, a vast educational program. It has only been just recently that we have been able to chart the interior process of any of the quarks to any degree of elementary accuracy.

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However, the very act of steering through this interior universe of all sound, all emotion, all motherhood, all sex, this type of experience obviously had its own rewards. Few specks have ever bothered to complain about the difficulty involved in Isolation. Imagine hurtling through all intellect past and future of men and specks! Or, if you can not begin to, just try and imagine that it was no longer necessary to imagine!

Of course, certain speck popular opinions arose regarding the quarks. Certain quarks were much more popular than others. Work, Intellect, Father and Mother quarks were not very popular. Nor were Miscellaneous and Political quarks. Soul was the least popular. Sleep was the most popular. Sex was next in interest followed by Taste, Touch, Visual and Audio. Emotion was a dangerous quark and was soon prohibited to all those who had not undergone a special educational seminar in its use.

Once the specks sat in their Personality Homes and felt a hundred various batteries whizzing through their minds. Now quarks were so powerful that only one could be attached at a time. Otherwise, the human nervous system could not cope with the enormous intensity and rate of change which the two or more quarks would produce. Safety gauges were quickly developed which would sound loud buzzers whenever two electrodes threatened to be attached to one speck simultaneously.

The Commission on Experience was responsible for today's modern Planet-Village more than any other group of scientists. Specks were able to regain the freedom their Personality Homes had stripped away and they had discovered the ecstasy of steering. This ends tape.

That was tape hagr. 1050-chris. This is Guide Voice. You will now please receive the following appendix to the preceding tape.

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Four years ago, there was a new discovery. A sixteenth quark was discovered, one which came outside the realm of miscellaneous. Through a unique discovery, it was possible to isolate an electric pulse-time band of static behavior. This is the Karmatic Belt named after its first explorer, Dr. R. F. Karmal. This belt contains every man and every speck that ever lived. That is, contains every one of his vibrations in dense electric bundles so that it is as simple as tuning a radio to tune-in an individual speck with the right equipment. Of course, this equipment, similar in fact to a radio, was extraordinarily rare at first. However, one such machine can extract a single set of vibrations and reproduce them. Then enclose them, the speck and all of his fifteen quarks, in a new quark. These are called shadows. You are privileged among the first ever to experience this particular one, known in circles beyond the Word Lock as "Chris." Your passage through the Lock was necessary for security reasons.

You will find a shadow carries all of the intensity of original quarks. You will also find it is an experience incredibly thrilling to be steered through another speck's experience. Without once exercising your own will. Chris is a particularly novel shadow as he is pre-battery and pre-Planet Village. Thus, he is not a speck but a "man." Almost all of Chris' experiences will be totally incomprehensible. However, you should have had enough training in quarks by now to enable you to ride with him until the initial confusion is past. We have also, for your benefit, labeled and sorted the Chris quark into the original quark code. All audio vibrations will be announced as "audio" and visual as "visual," etc.

We are going to give you just a sample of this shadow. It would obviously take years to experience an entire quark such as this. We begin:

Smell

Fresh limes in china bowl, cool smell of table cloth flat smell of folded linen. Crisp blue, wind creeping through roses in farm lot mornings one room school smell children stink, teacher attacks. Breath whine unpleasant old stink of

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flesh and dead brown teeth, saliva in dried apricot. Wheaties clogged on gold fillings and dairy sour.

Perspiring in hair clumps under brown arm odor smell finger in anal crack, loam of body shit. Smell finger of farm workings clothes of bleach ammonia linen clean britches.

New car plastic cells byproducts stench. Oil burning in nose behind cherry valley roses, clean swimming hole odor of rose smell and apple baking in wood oven.

Work

I took the boxes of assorted hose to the cellar. On the way I noticed a rake bin which the cat had knocked over. Dad called down for #18 screws so I had to rush. Then I set the stand back up and went over to brush off some tarps.

Then I went about the inventory on the outdoor goods. We had fifty bags of Kentucky blue grass seed, large. Three bags of medium. Twelve bags of small kernel. Ten bundles of McPherey's peat moss. Two fifty pound cartons of lime. Had to order ten more. We had twenty-two boxes of defoliant, three cartons of Avenge. A case of liquid Avenge. Four spray guns. About a dozen rattan rakes. Two McPherey spreaders. Ten metal hoes. A couple of plastic hoes. Remember to bring frdlt...father's eyes hard logs... sound of ... mower...

Father called me up stairs and ordered me to drive to Hartford for three Gould mowers from Gould warehouse. Took four hours. Man's name was Mr. Williams, big man with hair cut short head like cannon ball, nasty old guy.

I worked till eight. Then...

Eighty minutes for breakfast?

I was in the store at nine. Sorted lumber and made a few sales. Mom came in and helped out with the small-parts inventory. It was a slow afternoon.

Made a run to Deweler Wholesale for a barrel of nails and the lime. Did sales all afternoon. Sold a Gould mower. Sorted lumber again.

Audio

"When I was there for about ten minutes this man finally stood up and gave me his seat. You would do that wouldn't

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you, I mean you are a gentleman Chris. The conditions on the subways in the summer, especially during July, are incredible, awful, just awful. Did I tell you about Cathy Wallace? Her brother, did you know Joe? He was in Vietnam for a year? And he got wounded in the hip. With some grenade fragments. Yes, from one of those I guess. Anyway, he was back here and he was all healed and had only three weeks until the Army let him out...

Well, he started visiting this girl in Baltimore. She was the wife of his best friend over there. He was killed in some battle. Yes. Joe kept visiting her and Cathy told me that it made him so upset to see her so sad that's why he re-enlisted for four years. And asked for Vietnam again. Isn't that terrible? Personally, I think he went back because he found himself falling in love with her and felt too guilty about it. Cathy thinks it's because he wants to revenge his friend and kill more of the communists.

Here, I'll get it.

Wrong number... for Felix, ha.

Do you want to go to this concert Saturday? Or not? Tell the truth. Wait, I'll get a sponge. You want another? Vodka?

Murry is coming into town. My brother, the one at Penn Law. For a week and then he's going to Miami.

It is pretty crummy. No, I guess he doesn't know. Better? Good.

She's gone to visit her father in San Francisco. What about this concert, Chris? Sure, alright. Have you heard from your folks lately? Oh, that's nice. You want me to turn it up?

This way we can make it
If you know how to shake it
Shake it, break it, let me make it
This way we can fake it, baby

Baby baby baby
Let me turn you over
Over and over you know
Just where I want to go

This way we can make it
Shake it, break it, let me make it

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Don't try fake it baby
If you know how to shake it baby

Baby baby baby
Let me turn...

Visual

Subway entrance there. Steps. Booth. Black woman, brown hand with red polished finger nails. Token from pocket. Turnstile. Move through rush of... man in yellow shirt bumps... steps down sound shakes from down dust. Dust specks hanging over tracks. Tracks tracks mirror of candy machine. Face examine eyes close-up eyes red veins thin wrinkles under lids. Candy.

Tunnel entrance. Rails dust specks yellow light growing on tracks. See first white light. Both lights of train head. Rush train rush lights #2 driver bombs past in dark cabin slowing and screeching of metal see doors slide open. People inside vague light rise.

Political

When he declined the nomination I knew it was just a ploy. He had too much to lose.

Filbert is my man. In the first place, I think people are supporting him who are the coolest heads around, the most money, the best organization, the right pitch. And even if he has no national exposure, he has Collahan and Roscoe for advice. Did you read Grab's column? His wife is a winner. And he has this terrific family. I respect the man.

How he is going to do depends on how he handles the Epileptic problem. If he can join forces with McCarthy then I think as a ticket they could defeat the Mace team. Also, his statements on the Dowler Rene blow-up were by far the most insightful of any of the candidates. It's a little late in the season to try and ridicule a man's friends sexual behavior, you know? The media was rough on that though.

I don't know. Haven't read anything since I got back from the islands.

Rene was supposedly waging a contest with Mr. President

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in the State Department. He was a close friend of Thaddeus Mace. I think they probably called in the Senate boys and... okay then I'm paranoid but maybe if the Kennedy family had been a little more paranoid? The DIC is responsible for those assassinations, that's my opinion.

That really is a well designed button Filbert put out.

Emotion

At first it was like a hot coal sitting half-way down my throat whenever I would go out or get up I would think about her and see her face. It had gone on for a year and a half and now it was over. But then I could think back to that time with Jane. And that was good. I had never made love like that with Noel. That night had been an education for me.

New York was the bring-down. It was still hot as hell when I got back and humid, humid you wouldn't believe it. I found out about the job the second day back and the blacklist. Noel had really paid me back. So had that little fuck Philip Mace!

Mother

Her letter really got to me. She and Dad had been here for a week in February. And now she was complaining again about how I ignored them—unbelievable! She must be getting senile.

Always that rejection of hers, the closing in of opportunities when I was young, my efforts at pleasing them down the drain. She never noticed all those hours I worked only the bad times, the time I was washed out of school. Then in the Army all those letters of accusation all those awful messages of pure self-pity. And she thought Janet would never make a good mother!

I refuse to have the baby photographed again. The last time was less than a year ago and that photographer robs you blind. Even if she does pay for it, it makes me ill.

If they want to come next Christmas, that's okay. Anyway, they just want to take advantage of our California sun.

Sleep

fortunately Manda and you will change your swim soon

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after ninety days you can't get your pants off together free get my some sandwiches spread my god those hairs climbing the giant stools with the host Rudy and his tie then the top though I must not Janet coming calling me into the kids foot doctor bills for the doctor step on it free rum dixies grabbed my arm and said "Make it shake..." shoes which he wouldn't let go until saying good-bye out there with his eyes on my wife up you go customs shack in islands airport where natives tune in to allow Rudy in her pants almost off I gave each little toe a kiss and Billy laughed all the way down the gym the broken beaches tried to pull Lars out front they didn't notice all the hours of soccer let go of her arm see Noel there on crystal float raft of the footdoctor who smiled so much his hands shoot fucking balls Janet I'd like you to meet Rudy he is going wifey for kids thick wet lips sucking leap in the city this cloud stream in my lungs my god we have the money for

Touch

Formica.

Political

The whole thing was about the ruling on couches in your office. I finally had a good office with enough room and a rug. I saw no reason why I shouldn't have a couch in there as well. However, Martin Yailing, the Treasurer, had different views on the subject. He had instituted this rule about who could and who could not have couches in their offices. I felt that as long as I bought the couch with my own money, it was my business. Yailing wanted to risk taking this all the way to the Board.

I felt this was absurd.

Soul

twenty-four twenty-five twenty-six twenty-seven twenty-eight twenty-nine thirty one two three four five six seven eight nine ten eleven twelve thirteen fourteen fifteen sixteen seventeen eighteen nineteen twenty twenty-one twenty-two twenty-three twenty-four twenty-five twenty-six twenty-seven twenty-eight twenty-nine thirty one two three four five six seven eight nine ten eleven twelve thirteen fourteen

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Sexual

The zipper on his pants was difficult but she finally managed to yank it open. Then she fished with one hand for his penis. It was there, soft and cold. She took it in her hand and squeezed gently. He felt a wave of annoyance pass over his crotch. He tightened and then relaxed, waiting for her fingers to bring him the erection he wanted.

It was not long in coming. Soon it grew, rose up hot and taut in her fingers. She pinched lightly around his glans and he burned. She went down with her body to rub it into her cheeks and then into her mouth glazed and open but he pulled her head back up. He had her panties off and wanted to take her quickly.

The first seconds were painful for she was not wet enough. He budged and crunched at her, finally his muscle buckled into the arena and he let it slide slowly up into her belly. He felt a livid pink cloud settle behind his eyes as he slowly stroked down into her womb.

Miscellaneous

My brother's wife was really drunk and her father was upset. Janet and I kept trying to sneak out of the yard and maybe everyone else would get the hint and let them leave. I thought it was pretty dumb of my brother to stick around so long. The honeymoon was a joke, though, as he and Midge had been living together for a year at school.

Then I got hold of Nelson as he was going to the bathroom and I told him he had better get his bride out of there before they both passed out on the lawn. It was a shame Mom and Dad couldn't be there but Dad couldn't take the chance of all that travel with his heart. Nelson was not feeling any pain; he had always been an independent kid too. Probably why he ended up as a chemist. That was some salary he was going to be getting at Oilcon. And he was really happy about this assignment to Oklahoma, he was an outdoors man all the way. Midge seemed pretty ambivalent about the whole thing.

This is Guide Voice. At this time Mr. _____ we will have a short intermission.

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Homage to Jorge Guinhieme

Jorge Guinhieme, a leading writer and, according to many, founder, of the hasosistic school of Argentine poetry, was born in Buenos Aires in 1887. These tributes to him, along with this selection of his new poems, were originally published in Milagro (XCVII – 4) *earlier this year. Guinhieme's volumes include* Byways (1913), Hombre (1930), Otros Cristos (1957), *and his continuing life work,* The Streets of Buenos Aires.

One may wish to slaughter or to save the bull—but first one must master the cape. With the politics I differ; for the man I feel nothing but love. Without him I might never have been a poet. His esthetic discoveries were powerful enough to enable me to dispute with him to the death in an arena where the combat is eternal: the arena of poetry.

Juan Garcia

My first meeting with Jorge Guinhieme took place in October, 1956. The Argentina springtime was just beginning to cast its argent blossoms—for which the country is named, Guinhieme told me—all about, covering paseo and avenue with a beautiful surface season of their own, when the doorbell I had pushed with such impressment and anxiety on the reddish-blue door at 43 Calle de las piñas, sounded, and, as if by its own command, the door opened to reveal to me a cascade of blossoms, more silver than those on the streets: old, white-haired, laughing Guinhieme, attired in his garments of laughter, warmth, and ease. We soon found that we were in agreement on all the details of poetic diction and structure on which our colloquy touched. Guinhieme's mind has an amazing fresh-

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ness, which is one of the facts most memorable of those I carried away from that extraordinary afternoon. And his knowledge of so many matters was astonishing. Guinhieme, salute! And that for which I remember him best is his warmth and friendship, his air of easy welcome to a young man he had no necessity to know, and none whatever to receive.

Fidelio Corazon

I first saw Jorge Guinhieme at the Presidential Gala in 1948. I was introduced to him by a fellow poet—Garcia San Baz. I shall not soon forget my emotion when Guinhieme turned to me and said, "Yes, I have read your poems. You are the speaker of a new generation." But he said more then as well: "Do not forget the achievements of those who have come before. A shallow and tinny contemporaneity is no substitute for the *hasos* of the heart!" It was at the time of Guinhieme's great study of and exposition to us all of the *hasos*. He had no need to speak of "those who have come before," for he was ahead of us then as he is now. His most recent poem, "Flowering Breakfast," is both stylistically and hasosistically an advance on everything that has been done. For fifty years South American poetry has been triumphant: for fifty years it has followed where Guinhieme has led.

Jorge Foxe-Mariño

Great men have their seasons. For Guinhieme it has been perpetually spring. At the age of eighty he continues to write his *Streets of Buenos Aires*, whose subject matter is almost entirely girls! Dear old Guinhieme! Yet we dare not patronize his sensuality because we are younger than he. Not because of piety (true poetry, true poets have no need of that) or of thinking that we too shall some day be old, but quite simply because his poems contain a sensuality, a vivid, a dazzling sexuality, which is nowhere else to be found, neither in art nor in experience. What can we say? Guinhieme at eighty—a park filled with blossoming branches.

Reno Guitar

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Jorge Guinhieme

From *The Streets of Buenos Aires*

Daffodil Wine

When every street in Buenos Aires
Has at last been enclosed in a poem
I shall get drunk on daffodil wine
And celebrate seventy years of bachelorhood.
O Guinhieme! must you have always wine
When you are already drunk with years?

Watercress Street

A humble street! I see
A girl! She has orange sleeves,
Orange dress, orange shoes!
You belong on Orange Street!
No, I don't! says she.

Ruiz Avenue

Ruiz Avenue you are the heart-line of the city,
Its tempo and pulse, its artery, its medulla oblongata,
And yet you are not my favorite street.
Pushed about on your corners, one feels one has made
An error, that there is something wrong with the whole conception of the city.

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Calle de las piñas

Oh my own street!
At last, after so many chimneys,
So many barking dogs,
So many fragrant bodies of girls!
My own street! my own chimney!
My own barking dog! And—who can tell...?

Flowering Breakfast

Flowering breakfast, old secrecy downed with remorse,
You are fearless and speckled, hurt horse of my foreignness
Which sleeps with me on burning ways. It is night, old master
Of ruins, and now it is morning. Flowering breakfast—
Roses, hyacinths, Queen Anne's lace, poppies
Which give sleep, tulips which bring awakening,
Chrysanthemums, each one stuck in this morning's eye
Like an arugala branch. And it is time
For my coffee, old bent stabilities of Chinese fortress
Of winter and failing snow. Guinhieme! arise!
It is late! Your flowering breakfast
Is an invitation to the skies!

Translated by Kenneth Koch

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A Member of the Delegation

Keith Botsford

I ARRIVAL

The Reception Committee shuffled on the platform while Filyuchev, the Delegation bureaucrat, was still a step up on the train holding Metved's flowers which, hurriedly culled, showed serrated edges of dandelion. The Reception Committee was all coated: though mid-summer, the mountain night was chill. The night-shift railwaymen wore short jackets; they walked by in a smell of shag tobacco, barely curious.

The train was not much. Quite empty. An official train, put at their disposal. Old-fashioned, wooden-sided. It was dark in the carriage the Russians had just vacated. The train looked sad at having to go back the way it had come: all blank, dark windows.

Donskoi was the last one down from the train. A portrait in Socialist Realism, I thought, with his Stalin-grey moustache, his pores bigger than life, the hairs on his head individual grey-white streaks, his ears carved in heroic mold, his lips sprouting thick and palpable; and stooped under his thick shoulders as I'd seen in a hundred portraits, wearing the same denim shirt and baggy corduroy trousers: Donskoi, the peasant's son and Gorki's friend, on the bottom rung and shaking

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off Filyuchev's protectively proffered arm with a huge hand.

At four in the morning, the Station-Master has provided a table, a nearly white cloth. We stand about on the platform, drinking sweet Georgian champagne from cut-glass goblets: toasts to the Delegation, to us, to you, Donskoi! How old you look, and stunned.

When your old, stumpy legs strike the platform, you straighten up and look in the direction of a puff of small breeze that shakes up whorls of dust along the platform, following it back to its origin. As the farm-boy would: a cutting little edge of wind announces the first light. Then you sniff back along the tracks eastwards, where you've just come from.

Your first words are: *You know, I haven't been out of Russia since* 1934, *when I went to Paris and spoke at the Mutualité!* said to yourself. Another look along the dull track. Your eyes still lost in the place you left three days before.

I owe you so much. A dead horse still stinks in my nostrils, gutted, disembowelled: the Civil War taught the contemplation of death.

Everyone wrote about work, glorious labor. You wrote like scars: of the glare of the locomotive works, sweat-streaming bodies, glowing orange ants, on corroded boilers: Engine No. 402, RED STAR.

No love or idolatry in your version of the upheaval. In everything you wrote, the hideousness heaved off the page, your hatred of death and cruelty, futility and the arbitrary. The terrible cold, and terrible heat. How couples escaped briefly, among the borrowed square meters of relatives, on flowered sofas looted from nearby landowners. Rolled off at cock's-crow to a lathe or foundry: boredom and degradation. The eager shop-steward says, *Man is elevated in his humblest tasks when he imbues them with higher purpose!* His mates pull him off his perch on the X-crossed lower rungs of the traveling crane by his leather jacket: ribald laughs: *Easy there, Comrades! this little pigeon knows how to talk!*

Friendly: the time for killing is past. But also, there's no time for lies. By the blast furnace, the temperature is 150 degrees. What drives them on? Not glorious labor: it's

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slavery and sweat, no hope of escape, the State Alcohol Monopoly with the blue globe of light over the door, wives beaten or flung down like heaps of tubers, in shifts like sacking. The hopeful hero of the uprising who saw Trotsky sitting in his carriage on the Trans-Siberian under Victorian gaslight blew his brains out from this quotidian nightmare: the bullet pierced the rotten black metal and his body was burned clean in the scalding jet. The Representative of the Ministry made him a hero with a speech. A locomotive now bears his name through all Russia, welded over the tandemed wheels that are driven by oil-soaked rods and say THERE IS NO HOPE, THERE IS NO HOPE, THERE IS NO HOPE, faster and faster, further and further.

Donskoi does not take Bowaters' hand, and thus INTER-CULTURE's; nor listen to Metved stammer in bad Russian—what honor, what joy; he takes half a dozen steps towards me and says, *How are you, young man? I'm glad to see a young man. Always glad.*

Young students trek to his cottage outside Moscow to ask about the past. To put them at their ease, Donskoi says, *Now that I'm too old to write, I'm supposed to talk!* He jokes: *So you're surprised I'm still alive!* A national treasure.

He walked towards me as though carrying a darkness forward with him. The others watch, almost fearful: for his safety, which is important: something of value on foreign loan. When he spoke to me, he put his right hand on my shoulder: a solid, heavy, tired hand.

I have seen a letter that circulated after the war, in answer to an invitation to come West. He wrote: *After nearly twenty years in which they have asked me not to write or tried to tell me how to write, I've grown to like silence. I'm used to it. Like a warm boot in winter. You couldn't make heads or tails of what I would say, even if I could talk.*

How are you, young man?

Filyuchev hurries up behind him. It is of his nature to interrupt, heartily, with a big smile: his teeth swim against the neutral color of his tongue and gums: *Maxim Leonovich!*

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All of us old men like to see the young, don't we! That's our trouble. We're growing old! His eyes are averted, to the tassels on Bowaters' shoes, and—as for protocol's sake he plucks at Donskoi—to where Bowaters' hand, emerging, white, from his camel's-hair sleeve, awaits.

You say that at every meeting, Konstantin Sergeyich. But you're not old. Not the way we count time. You aren't young either. You're an in-between man. When I started learning all I know, you were a schoolboy. And even then, you smiled too much.

Bryusov, interpreter, all gold teeth, talks busily to Chavchadze: not everything should be translated. But the Georgian bears Bowaters over. While Donskoi speaks, the Delegation smiles like ballet dancers, through the most exacting feats. Donskoi looks into my eyes; his glint with an old man's malice or mischief and then, as he turns to Bowaters, fade into patience. Through the INTERCULTURE Secretary's mellifluous words, he mutters, *Ochen' nravits'a, ochen' nravits'a,* delighted, delighted. He shakes Metved's hand, too: summarily, turning up the collar of his shirt. *You must forgive me. I'm an old man. I'm very tired. I don't like ceremonies. The journey is long.*

Delegation and Committee march to the two lone black cars drawn up behind the station, roofs bright with dew. I hold the door open and before the back seat, cavernous and plush, swallows him up, Donskoi says, *I am eighty this week.* He laughs, somewhere in his chest, through mucous. *I should be receiving delegations in my dacha and instead I'm here. Stupid old Donskoi! Why do you think they let him out?*

Bryusov sits high up in the front seat as in a nursery chair. He points to the key and the driver starts the engine. The others want to go to bed: *Davai, Maxim Leonovich,* Staroschinski, the one-armed philosopher says, *ne hoces' spat?* Don't you want to sleep? Donskoi is awake, but still untranslated.

Years ago I asked to come here, and now they've let me come. To a meeting? No, because I want to pick mushrooms! I make excellent pirashki. If I have time...

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Bravo Donskoi! Filyuchev says, trying to embrace him in the back seat but caught up in his own coat, unable to encompass all of Donskoi's broad shoulders. *Maxim Leonovich's mushroom pies are famous!*

Though you've never eaten one in my house!

The car lurches forward, but Donskoi's stone-grey head leans out of the window as he rolls it down. *I hear the mushrooms are different here!* he shouts out. *Different!*

II LET A THOUSAND MUSHROOMS BLOOM

Where we were headquartered, perched overlooking a Franz Josef picturesque postcard of a blue lake, ringed by mountains—which, together with a few socialist falterings of amenities, minded us we were cut off from the West—the news of Donskoi's arrival brought joy: we would have the grey figures in square socialist suits and crêpe-soled shoes (nyep, nyep, nyep, was the noise they made) but also a real man.

Yuri was serious. He insisted: *Tell me every word, every gesture. What he said, how he said it: it's all important.* And I did.

But Svet was laughing. *Allons planter des champignons,* he demanded. *We must plant mushrooms all over the lawn of the Russian villa! Everywhere he walks he will stumble across mushrooms! Beautiful mushrooms, new mushrooms, mushrooms such as he has never seen!*

Yuri remained silent. *Donskoi won't say a word,* he said. I answered that he would.

I'll make him.

They won't let him. They'll take him about by the hand, like an upright effigy from Lenin's tomb.

But Donskoi had to speak: ten decent, honest words. I hated the presumption of despair in my friends. *The East is all despair,* I said. *He's so old, and so tired. He can tell us what it was like. They can't take that away from him now.*

Yuri shook his head stubbornly. *Every man has something left they can still take away. I beg you, don't ask him to speak. Let him*

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live out his life in silence if he wants to. You Americans are all innocents. You don't know what you ask of us.

III THE ROUND TABLE

Before Donskoi spoke, we were in the second day of our discussions on the subject of The Artist and his Responsibility to Society. Twenty-two of us seated before pads and pencils, glasses at each place, painted earthenware, carafes of white wine with beads of moisture up to their tall, slender necks and bottles of once-icy, soon-warm white brandy.

A. The Case for the State

Donskoi had up-ended his first glass, then a second: some delegation they were! Chavchadze thought. From the previous day's discussion, a loser, Staroschinski had returned to the villa for lunch sweating, a single circle of perspiration under his single arm. An old story: the West sent more competent people. Not fools who were too old to be playing the hero abroad. Twenty million people died in a decade, and the Government sent an amputated arm as a badge! Or an old war-horse of the great long-ago Revolution who drank too much. As usual, Russia was squeezed between dogma and sentiment.

And then, the West didn't understand history. And people like Donskoi didn't either. Each understood only his own! What a mistake!

The Delegation had come all this way, to the marches of socialism, this country that was neither here nor there: someone had to explain. The Round Table was to discuss (uninscribed on the agenda, between the lines) a single poet recently imprisoned. How unrealistic! After thousands had died? The poet should fall to his knees in gratitude!

We are the parts, he began, *and society is the whole machine. Like any machine, someone has to design it, repair it, give it a purpose and then drive it. That someone is the state. Not because*

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the state is necessarily ideal—far from it, states make mistakes; we lived through years of agony—but who else can or will? The state's there to educate society, to show the machine its functions, to the point the machine knows what it's meant for and what it can do; then the state can let go of the controls.

He saw a lawn mower, painted bright red, three banks of cutters wide: in Paris on his last visit, in an autumnal light, such a machine had been making long stripes on the lawns of Versailles: a machine that gobbled up grass and mulched leaves and sluiced them into a canvas bag riding behind, and did this with the whole-hearted pleasure of a lesson well-learned.

He was just warming up, pushing a shock of bright yellow hair back from his eyes, carefully retaining the calm objectivity of his voice. Not too much passion: most of the people here didn't know what it meant, to *believe* in something. Besides, the world today was much too complex for the haphazard. *We have not mentioned the name of the poet who is the pretext for these interesting discussions of ours*, he said benignly. The West was scattered about the table, slouched and half asleep, trailing clouds of smoke from the corners of their mouths: as full of tics as horses' tails swatting flies! *You want to condemn the jailing of a poet! We would all like to! I myself pity him sincerely! And I have come willingly to discuss his case and others; it is I, a Soviet citizen, who first mentions his name—Miodrag Zoran! I do not want him in prison, nor anyone. I'm sure the government doesn't want him in prison. So who wants him in prison? Miodrag Zoran wants to be in prison.*

And I pity him.

Why? Because we're all artists and intellectuals around this table, and we know what we have to do. I pity those who don't know what they have to do. Miodrag Zoran among them. Good! the Georgian thought, the West was shifting uneasily: St. John with his early-white, fluffy-laundered hair and white-and-yellow freckled arms looking out at the lake, pale eyes searching the water for the boats and supple boatmen who rowed him and his boys about; or the subtle, beaky Monza with his peasant obstinacy; one or two others perhaps who had been "betrayed" by the Left and thought their martyrdom

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was so splendidly unique! How many millions lost their lives in Russia! Not just their boyish ideals! And couldn't come sit around tables by a blue lake with all their expenses paid by INTERCULTURE or RADIO This-or-That! These were no more artists now than he was: but professionals, with positions to declare, for which they were well-paid. At meetings everywhere. As he was. Looking down on Bowaters as he on poor, slippery, afraid-of-stumbling Konstantin Sergeyich; but doing the work.

The artist is the conscience of the state. We in the USSR honor ours; by listening to them, by reading them. We know the artist is privileged and has his part in the great machine!

That too would upset them; Westerners all complained of being slighted, disregarded: who read St. John now, compared to when he had been the shock-of-haired gawky genius of an active, revolutionary poetry?

The artist has a special function: to show the state how to better society, by pointing out existing evils, AND their remedies. The artist's not the sort of a mechanic who looks at the machine and says, "This doesn't work. This needs doing and that's been put in wrong. That part there is worn out." Who goes out into the world and tells everyone the machine's no good just because he's pleased with himself for having recognized its defects.

Two things were wrong with Zoran: he behaved with irresponsibility. Perhaps that would have passed. The state is tolerant. But then he wanted to show off his superiority outside his own country!

No, the loose cog in the machine, the sarcastic mechanic, is like the doctor you find on the golf-links or the plumber who won't come until after you've asked a half-dozen times: he's shunned for not doing his job. Making a new and better society is too urgent a task to allow any weakness or malice.

The transcript simply notes: SILENCE.

No one expects such rhetoric from the Georgian. In the hotel grounds he is taken for the Delegation clown and greeter, the all-language glad-hand bearing the keys to the city—in his case, Tiflis. And he has been seen in yellow

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water-wings on the lake, trailing yellow hair on the surface like a ducktail. Tom Paragould, chairing, looks for an intervention, a reply.

B. A Private Reply

Eleanor Flowers answered Tom Paragould's signal because she simply failed to see what she, soft and flowery, had to do with machines. She found the Georgian's name on the list before her and then said (her consonants puffed gentle sugar as through Turkish delights), *I admire Mr. Chavchadze... Do I say it right, Mr. Chavchadze? Thank you... for his ability to put the problem to us so clearly.*

But I can only say for myself, that even in complete silence in my room, lying cosy in a warm bed of a winter night, when I try to put an ear to my own tiny machine... I assure you, to lull myself to sleep, and not to change the world or make it a better place... I have the greatest difficulty: I tug and strain and count silly one-eared sheep... I find it helps make their jumping less utterly ridiculous, alternating right-eared and left-eared sheep... but all I hear is the roar of the whole machine, as Mr. Chavchadze put it, society, the state and ideas, what people have said and asked me to do, trains running late, telephone calls I haven't returned. I long to escape the roar. I'd give anything to be able to turn it off and just be me, by myself.

So if I had to advise the engineers and drivers of your new society, my dear Mr. Chavchadze, I'd only tell them to shut the damned machine down and let me get to sleep!

I suppose I'm only saying, with typical English amateurism, that I'm unfitted to advise. The sorry fact is—I'm sure I'm to blame—that I myself am uncontrollable. For instance, I'm known for the way I burst into tears over nothing at all, and it's public record I've been in love many times against all reason and probability of reward. Anyone who knows me, knows I'm surprised by everything. What legislator would listen to me? Or should?

I'm sure I'm committing every anti-social sin our poet Mr. Zoran should be punished for, and more. I hope you won't punish me... (SHOUTS: *Never!* ADDRESSING THE DELEGATE FROM THE G.S.S.R.)

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How would you—you're a young and good-looking man... You see? Even you are irrationally upset if I state a simple fact—how would you advise the state about me? I'm sure I'm a terribly rotten mechanic and I'm never at home when England needs me...

THE TRANSCRIPT HERE NOTES: a general blowing of kisses.

CHAVCHADZE (G.S.S.R.): (RISING) *I would advise the state to fall in love with you.* (CHEERS)

ELEANOR FLOWERS (U.K.): (DELIGHTED) *Alas! None so far has...*

ARTHUR LEARNED (U.S.A.): *Machines never work! They're made so they don't work and you have to buy new ones! That's anarchy, and very healthy for the machines.*

PARAGOULD (U.S.A.): *Great for the machines! How do you like it when you have to step out of your fat Buick on the Expressway and stare helplessly at a boiling radiator?*

LEARNED (U.S.A.): *I kick it. I give it a good kick and I feel better.* (BOWING TO THE REPRESENTATIVE OF THE G.S.S.R.) *A suggestion I pass on to you, for what it's worth.*

DONSKOI (U.S.S.R.): *Do you really own a Buick?*

LEARNED (U.S.A.): *I don't have a car at all. I never really got with America. I'm just a poor immigrant boy really. My folks came from Russia...*

C. A Shaggy Car Story

Donskoi's intervention catches us by surprise. We think him asleep. Infinitely bored with us all: that everyone's ambition should be at the expense of another.

Next to me the young Czech, Cipek, whispers to Mrs. Nisbett: *I never knew he was still alive.* She answers, red jaws working, chapped red cheeks wobbling, *Hardly!*

Donskoi says: *I saw a Buick once: standing up on blocks in a Fire Station in Grigoryevsk. 1938. I spoke to the Chief. I said, what's this doing here? With only three cars in Grigoryevsk, and one of them your fire engine, the mayor on foot, you don't use it?*

There it was, shining, waxed, beautiful, complete!

He let me look: the famous writer from Moscow. But even that

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was a lot in those days! There it was: great plush seats, perfect. Under the hood, motor intact! He showed me everything, in loving silence: ashtrays, lights, a lined glove compartment, trunk, spare wheel. Even the tires were perfect, stacked against the wall. And the horn made a lovely double note, like two hunters at once. If you drove that car you could see yourself overtaking all right! Clouds of dust!

Obstinate as if he had boots on his hands and walked upside down! Not a word about the car! Not a single question answered!

E-ekh! I remembered the car for years!

Then during the war, I find myself in the same town again, in the same fire station; I think I see the same Chief in his bright leather hat, with old-fashioned hussar's moustaches...

At his pause, which lasts too long, while he pours himself a glass and drinks it, we all think he has lost the thread.

Arthur Learned leans bullishly forward on the table. *For Christ's sweet sake: was the f---ing car still there?*

Chavchadze enjoyed himself. Finished his piece, *ma petite scène*, he called it, didn't mind relaxing with the wonderfully inventive West, their delightful irrelevance. Minds like babies, he thought: attention span, five minutes, glutted with diversions.

Donskoi springs back to life. He's like a short-wave message: fading in and out. *The Buick had been buried*, he says. Buried? Why buried? *Patience.* He finds something remaining in his glass and then continues: *Patience. I was taken to the place where they had buried it. A nearby copse. Thick leaves underfoot. Two landowners should have appeared; Ivan the Fool has been caught felling trees!*

Arthur Learned has the impatience of a bed-time child: *Why'd they bury the car? Just tell me that!*

Because it was beautiful.

No one in that town would have dreamed of driving it round on their rotten roads, scratching its flying mudguards, choking its beautiful horn with dust, colliding with hayloads and chaff!

But why? Arthur Learned insists, perspiring. We all are: with concentration. I from translating, and missing much. *I know all about your enigmatic goddam Russian soul and I've read*

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your goddam long Russian novels... I don't mean specifically yours, you understand, Dustyevsky, crap like that. You're all mad! But why? That's a stupid goddam reason isn't it? What'd he do, just look at it? The Fire Chief?

Donskoi's voice grows quiet. He wants a drink and Chavchadze tries interdictions with gestures and blinks, eyebrows and yellow hair. Paragould pours the old man a glass. Still Donskoi looks vague, looks at something far away.

For the same reason, he says, *all sorts of people weren't shot after the Revolution who perhaps or probably should have been shot: old, tiny ladies in silk and chokers on their withered skin, pretty girls in provincial towns, the tutor fresh from the seminary, in nankeen. Because they were beautiful, or useless; or because people were inexperienced in shooting. Not everyone, you know, knew how to go about shooting pretty people. The same people wouldn't have known how to drive the Buick. You can't tell what will be spared, or why.*

The old man runs his hands through his hair: every strand stands out, each a straggler.

Why? he says to himself, *Why would I invent that car now?*

D. From Tom Paragould, A Moment of Conscience

Much later—it seemed hours had passed—and listening to Arthur and Tolliver and the other young men, mostly the Americans, Paragould thought: how little responsibility they show! to anything!

When I was younger, he prodded himself, I did feel something. Not unlike the old man, really. Society, the State: I didn't just laugh.

Listening to the French drone on in French, it came back over him, like a fresh taste of excitement: the resolution to do something about society; justice, he remembered—the world was unjust.

He wanted to know if it had been the same with Donskoi. The old man—well, he was twenty-five years older!—Donskoi was the one man there who might have shared some of his feeling.

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He let the French talk on. He leaned across Mrs. Nisbett whom some fool had stuck next to him; her jaws clicked like knitting needles: *Eh! Donskoi? I think I ceased to think about all these things when I was thirty. It ceased to excite me. Same thing happen to you?* Of course, they shut the old man up, too. *Eh?*

There was no response from the old man. Then Paragould remembered this business of languages. Where was Sunday, who spoke them all? (Turning flowery French into fatuous English for St. John, who wasn't interested.) Paragould would have given up, but the question seemed important.

Perhaps now it only troubled the people who weren't world-famous: the young, say, the ones with items to square away against America and the world!

Sunday, he whispered urgently across the table, *ask Donskoi when he gave up worrying about this kind of question, will you? You know, the Artist and Society and all that?*

You think it's a damned fool question to ask, he thought, rubbing his necktie with his glasses, and momentarily losing sight of Donskoi, but when you're famous, boy, then everything you do counts. I mean, imagine if Donskoi here were to tell everything he knew. Even a small part. He put his glasses back on.

Come on, Sunday, use your gift of tongues. Ask him. He's the only man here I really care about. I like all of you, but it's different for you. Donskoi is like me. You see, I used to get excited by it all; I could again, maybe. No... I doubt it. Was I wrong to stop getting all het up...?

But he's asleep, Sunday answered. *He's been asleep and happy the last half-hour.*

He was, too. His eyes barely visible under their heavy lids, grey eyebrows. Old men often slept like that: you could still see a fraction of white, the eyeball. The Georgian was grinning at Donskoi too: two hands together as in prayer, held to his ear, head drooping to one side: *Faire do-do*, he said.

Asleep? Paragould said: *Shall I stop all this shit for his sake?*

Sunday nodded; several others were weary too; and the French wanted lunch. Paragould raised his fingers to his lips and went *Shhhhhhh*. Sustaining it past Chavchadze's objec-

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tions, angrily saying, *I don't want him woken up suddenly for anything*, until all but Sunday had filed out.

E. Closing Ceremony

The Lovely L, responsible without for lists, transcripts, agenda, tickets, the well-being of all including myself, I tell her, joins me at the table, waiting. I love her, so we can wait without pain. Mop comes in, ancient lady behind it, tall and spiky, wearing felt slippers: she sees Donskoi and out of respect wraps around one slipper, her duster, and around the other, her kerchief.

Later, Donskoi wakes up serenely, combs out his moustache with his fingers: *E-ekh!* he says, *one of the few privileges of an old man, to sleep at any time. No one offended. Zhena?* he asks, pointing a finger at my Laura. *Your wife?*

No. A ljubimaja, I answer. Loved. He nods.

Nu, let's go.

Along the lake, in silence. At the gate of the Russian villa, we are halted by the policemen: in pairs, always, in grey greatcoats with lapels wide as bat wings. *You see*, he says, *you can't come in and taste my mushrooms!* Then he laughs good-naturedly at the policemen: *What a joke! If only these two understood! They let me out, and then they won't let you in! So, goodbye. Thanks for the company.*

He shakes my hand, claps me on the back. *Malshik! Young man!* Then the Lovely L's hand, at first. But once holding it, instead of clasping it in his own two hands—she would be lost in their warmth—he suddenly holds her hand in one open palm, where it looks infinitely small and smooth, and then falls on it with his lips. He kisses her hand with the brief, rough gesture of a bird swooping on a fish in water.

IV AFTER THE BANQUET IS OVER

No one saw Donskoi then until the banquet, at which he sat at the high table, and had to listen among others, to Filyuchev and Metved, then Commissioner Hack speaking vice-

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presidentially for the American membership: these and many others tried to put their formulas, congratulations and self-esteems into circulation over a drunken hum from the floor, failing always until Bowaters had to rise and say, *I have never attended an INTERCULTURE meeting at which our membership has been quite so rude*. But he was only barely audible himself in spite of his fine, lacquered voice.

During all the speeches Donskoi could be seen nodding, drinking, perhaps sleeping and then emptying his glass again on the next toast: and finally receiving an ovation for his eightieth birthday and an eighty-candle bedecked cake that was borne aloft on the blades of four swords. Hours of this and the air so spattered with meaningless words. I think, after, we all wanted to go home alone, each to his own silence. For silence, I could part even from my Lovely L: I left her dancing and took the lake road again, this time, past our house. Behind, the Grand Hotel danced its broken and spattered lights, like fireworks and festivities reflected, on the water.

Not far ahead of me was another figure, also walking, also alone. We trod solidly; our steps mingled, carved a single methodical sound out of the silence. Almost square, when seen from behind like that, but when I caught up, seen to be slightly bent forward. Donskoi, wearing his banquet suit of thick grey serge.

Ty, he said thickly, *You! You should be back there dancing with your beloved!* His left hand wiped his moustache, where the grey was mixed with wine. *E-ekh!* he said, *I have a terrible taste in my mouth.*

Can I walk with you? I had the same foul taste: Filyuchev speaking for Donskoi's Russia, Commissioner Hack for my America?

Instead of answering, Donskoi set off: the pace, his childhood's and unchanged. It had trod off every condition in life and every age I had not yet reached. *The night air will do us good*, he said.

Donskoi could give us a clean taste in our mouths. He would speak for us all. I told him, *Just ten decent, clean words, that's all, at the closing session tomorrow morning. Please.*

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Ne mogu, he answered heavily. *I can't.*

Yes, I know. I've been begged not to ask him. *Yes, I know, but sometimes it's necessary…*

Impossible. He walked slightly ahead of me, thick hands knotted behind his back. *Nevozmozno. Impossible. I've got nothing to say to anyone. Nothing, believe me.*

When we reached the portals of the Russian Villa, Donskoi walked right on past the entrance, shoulders hunched, without a greeting to the two policemen pacing: so that was not home to him.

He repeats the word *impossible* to himself several times, and each time, one hand comes free from behind his back and runs over the top of his head. His heavy rooty fingers dangle down, then march through his hair (his unevenly bristly, every-strand-distinct and trampled-on hair) like defeated infantry. His body stoops, not just with age, under an army of shadows. Who are they? the destroyers of his revolution? His shackled friends marching to their fate? *You have everything to say*, I tell him. *Nothing is impossible.*

E-ekh, ty! he mutters. *You're young!*

Forget the past! Forget the people who can't come back, marching, women and children accompanying! Forget the years, the tears shed, the humiliations suffered silently! Donskoi, there is a great peace over your grey head now, age, a marvelous silence! *They'd listen to you! Say just ten true, good words tomorrow! For all of us!*

He stops in a patch of shadow, and again his hand, like a large leaf, falls on his moustache. *You have no idea what you're asking. You have no idea. You're too young to know. E-ekh, ty! Ty, malshik!* It sounds like a long sigh: *e-e-ekh!* He turns away so I can't look into his eyes.

Look, I know, I said to Donskoi, *Believe me, Maxim Leonovich, I know. And the past's better forgotten. If you tried to explain it to me, it would stand between us.*

The old man thought with some bitterness (that was like a cold wind at home, hunting for mushrooms after summer was over; when rain started stripping leaves from birches and his boots got sucked up in soggy leaves), what the boy said was

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true. The young man would believe him if he described all those years as *cold, terrible, exhausting*—those were the words that came to him. Believe him, yes, but make sense of it, no. The generations had nothing to say to each other, so it was better to keep faith with silence.

But among all the things that could not be conveyed, one outweighed all the others, Donskoi thought. *It's not just all the dead ones,* he said, *it's much worse to lose life and soul than just life. Your life's nothing. But everyone believed...* He stopped. What had they believed, really? Or had they just got caught up? Wars and revolutions were tyrants; they grasped you. Sometimes you didn't know it... *in paradise... Then our paradise destroyed us; none of us could ever trust in a paradise again.*

Or even, he thought, a little fragment of paradise, like the boy's ten true decent words.

It didn't destroy all of you, I answer, *it didn't destroy you!*

Donskoi makes a gesture: something like pushing an indecent object away, as though something nasty has stuck to his hands; at the same time, like a lazy old dog behind a bolted door, he squeezes a sound out of his ribs, a laugh and a growl together. *If you think that,* he says, *you're even younger than I thought. So young you don't even know what destruction looks like.* Like a pigeon dropped into a field, he thought, limp in the dog's mouth: the hole made by the bullet can't be seen for the down and feathers, but the body cools and hardens before the hunter adds it to his bag.

Donskoi means to be kind and his great hand falls on my head, like a father's on his son's, and turns it towards him. *Even if you were my son—you wouldn't make a bad son!—E-ekh! Malshik! Even then, you couldn't understand.*

To the old man, it seemed that often it was the right words that were missing. *Cold, terrible, exhausting, frightening, but especially cold*—those were the right words, but what did they mean to the *malshik*? What was the worst the boy could imagine for those words? Not a thousandth part of the truth!

The right words, he thought: that was what he had hung onto all his life. To convey what had *actually happened* to

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someone who was not even born then, one had to speak with a terrible clarity or not speak at all. That was why he refused to speak there, in Mlady Boha, at their meeting, where everyone muddied words that had to be clear, beautiful words if they were to be understood. The only words he could speak were in a company of one: by the moonlight and a lake even then still like a postcard!

In every period, Donskoi supposed, there were a few clear people who gave the illusion knowledge passed from generation to generation. *Everything I had to say*, he ended, *I said in my books, as long as I could.*

At the Villa, the shifts had changed. The police had to call within to get Donskoi admitted; while they waited, Donskoi embraced me three times, *in the Russian manner*, he said. Once he had been let in, half way down the gravel, bright white by the moon between the dense humescence of ornamental plants, he turned around to see if I were still waiting: and seeing me, he said, *About speaking, I will let you know in the morning... Perhaps... It does one good to walk. It reminds me of long ago. I could sleep well tonight, but perhaps... who knows? Perhaps I shall write...*

V THE MANUSCRIPT OF THE SPEECH

Sitting in front in the Assembly Hall when the Delegation arrived and Donskoi, with Bryusov trotting at his side, came striding down the aisle, Donskoi pushed something roughly into my lap, bending suddenly down towards me as he had fallen onto the Lovely L's hand: a half-dozen pages of writing, in pencil, on a child's notebook paper, lined with blue squares.

The squares were unusually numerous, the points of intersection of the lines unusually blue. His hand had written in pencil, stubbily. His heavy hand had pushed the pencil stubbornly across the paper, for a few pages, and then torn them out hurriedly, before he could change his mind.

They are for you, malshik! A souvenir!

Wait, don't go away! Come back! I have to thank you! But

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he was gone, and up the dais. The same denim shirt and baggy corduroy trousers, as seen in a hundred portraits.

Bryusov translates only the half that is least painful.

The speech is built on one word, the Russian word for cold, *hólodno*. The accent is on the first deep round *o* that comes up (buried between the original thick consonantal *h* and the dense glottal *l*, lumpy, lead-like) like a rush of wind in a snowy-boughed forest deep within him, and emerges, slow and clotted with its passage, to rush on to two other *o*'s, much lighter, but still not light at all. *Hólodno*. Cold.

It is cold throughout his speech. Terribly cold. The world is cold and people are cold. Silence is cold, solitude is cold. Children are cold. Mothers are cold. *Byl hólodno, hólodno i hólodno*. Silence is cold and death is cold. Words are cold. He was cold. We are cold. What we think is cold is cold: snow is cold, space is cold, and distance. Statues are cold and the lines before shops; so is the earth and potatoes frozen in the ground, *and we have numb fingers*. And what should be warm is cold, too. Fire does not heat. The sun is cold and low. Letters from faraway are cold, and unthinkable. Friends are cold. The times are cold. *Hólodno: Byl hólodno. It was cold. Always cold.*

His speech is the recapitulation of a life: it was always cold. The half-dozen sheets of paper I have in my hands have taken more than half a lifetime to write, to learn to speak that one word, cold, *hólodno*.

If everyone cries, and they do, is Donskoi warmed? Not at all. I have his speech but I wish I could return it to him. Yuri, who begged me not to ask Donskoi to speak, has his face buried in his hands. I can hear his accusation again: *You Americans are all innocents; you don't know what you ask of us!*

I know what Donskoi is giving up with every word he utters and that he has written there on the blue-squared paper in my hands: at every emergence of that cold from within him, every time the word is repeated (and it returns forever, cold, cold, cold) Donskoi is giving up a year of his life: to have uttered the words is to have dropped them behind him, out of his huge, thick, stubborn hands, forever.

To be ready to die.

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VI DEPARTURE

The Russian train again left in the middle of the night, East, into the same night from which it had emerged; went off slowly; on a down gradient under rudimentary signals, a disheveled gantry; a little less dark than on arrival. Filyuchev and the Georgian had already gone West to other meetings, Filyuchev with his eye on London to buy a pair of Bowaters' tasseled, unsqueaking shoes. Bryusov with them: you no longer need my services, he said to Donskoi.

A little less dark at Staroschinski's insistence: Donskoi drank with him and helped him to bed, and then Donskoi's compartment was the last one lighted, in which he packed mushrooms to dry on cotton wool, that on return, after the long journey, would have to be placed in tall glass jars in a clear solution of nineteen parts formaldehyde to one part water, to preserve them from the degeneration of living matter, except the brightly colored ones, to whose solutions would have to be added mercuric acetate, or those same bright colors would dissolve.

Delegations are greeted only on arrival. Which accounts for my absence.

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Sotère Torregian

Russian Hill

A man like snow in Paris beautiful machine
Riding into the stars
A world of Michaels
You can blow it like glass I have never seen

The rip-roaring songs of the ladies
Make gold coins
There of a form of a dead horse
In the snow of Indiana
The sun is going down
The sun is going down

Hunter Helen Da Vita Tribute! Ignite
In Her Honor the contents of four
Medium sized ashcans. Throw in nickels as many
As possible into the flames
all the while

I greeted you like a long lost palm tree
Palm tree you were and *are* my labor

The Home of the Ten Most Wanted Men
Skillets us. I can find no formality
Except for nurses peeking over the clouds
And answering in music to my malady "Red Cloud"

Terrific forces under the
Earth pushed up.
All the force I lifted as the light part
Sank.

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Who will write of the mortality
O mortal of the chemical musician?
Eating a prohibited Danish
The old lady in the bakery saying "I'll eat
Some of those today"
Policeman of the ziphyr! Queen Mab rod!
Aghaday
[Space for This Machine
Is Donated]

At night I search on the mammoth's
Skull
O Sunday donuts of spring!
The feces of little children lies in your lap!

Greetings we can't remember one day from another
In an anonymous desert of food
I always wave my white blanket to
Greetings thousands crowd the great tent
Although I think they are in error
Greetings we can't remember who you are

To be in this strange city of sparks
Where I can roll and roll forever
I have messages of the sword which are
My menial oracles
My wife a pinpoint
Although she is with me nearby forever coming
Forward on my knees of the lamb
Cyclists of the Auberge! who are really trees!

"It would be an interesting risk!"
The vast telepathy of death hello this is your mommy deposition
O the infernal Milesian punch proffered us sprockets
The handy grail in the spring of magazines! Found you!
We never budge, uncontrolled from the top
And we laugh when doubtless
Being nice with a comfortable "platoon"

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Hear my flag, dawn
My intravenous architectures
What I haven't even started yet
In going from one place to another

Conspiracy of huckleberries everywhere O jowls
Giggling and kicking at me
That I find a please key
To the tin calendar

Do not drop your letters by my wayside
Much of what I've carried with me
Santa Clara!
    Adultery of the throat
A lullaby still throbbing handed me
By silver arms which I chop off
Coming into a remembered terrain.

After this encouragement
I am putting up my wings in the orchards
They are really kites
With the signet "Man in the Moon" on them.
The minute moon goes up and down at once
Approvingly and disapprovingly
Inside the gigantic fireplace formed in
The shape of an owl's face
It is the whole landscape painted orange

O maiden sprung of water!
In detestation of my travels
    Thunderherd Maundy
Yami
Cupola
        Watermelon in the air
The birds take flight
(War of errants and guides)
The cry of Cerkowitz

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Time of Census-takers
Dragoons Nocturnes Plead my case
That everything would be volatile child-piano
Again that we could recoil
Uphill to us!
That the farm could be my naked ease
And drink my mother

But you are loving as a sand dune All tresses of the dunes

We are the first employees
In your Jules Verne country standing legs
Wide-apart over the Mare Tranquilium
A shoe flies out of the window flop (!)
Your mother and father send up a distress signal
Of jewels then retire to bed like Alps.

If at the ulcer where I stand
All lies bleeding in stamps
O laborers
For the afternoon telephone of "Dad
Can we borrow?"

The racing car dances
Living room of midnight
I have the plaint
Of Wednesday in the dog.

These, then, are the much more sober lives

O plain and sky coming in wearing
An evening thatched mask of Nairobi
Where my creation is most natural
Of things seen and unseen I am the wheels
Light that goes everywhere!
So that in the light still I see
There isn't any garb
That's too meaningful
That Bethel model airplanes

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The sound is familiar
Southern coast of the woman with concealed gun
And twenty-four babies
Grinning the rose
What mortal has heard as we have when
Molten mistakes flight.

When it has rung its (seals) white
I have gone to its nipple shore
When I'm sick
O Coptic zero I scrounge
Every time a "Refugio" quick
Policeman lights in the chest
In case turns tumors of bikes into
Old childhood friends

Hi! Ballet lessons of the swart,
Leave your triangle
        to infect others
And go elsewhere

You take too seriously
I must get about my business

My armband must think
    in the recital snows
Permanent

Ah thank-you rush heading
In the sleek county offices
Tests should be fun
    When you've picked a bald eagle
        clean
We're all afterwards
In this space I have left to myself
Where in the hangar in doldrums the
Daughters of aristocrats propel in aesthetic urine
This confusion
Voyageur
That comes out of here anyway

February-May 1967

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The Burglars

Barton Midwood

The apartment has been burglarized again. They have taken a record player, a typewriter, a portable radio and other things besides. When I ask the detective if he would recommend a watchdog, he replied, "No, they will only steal the dog as well." And of course, he was right. They did. They took the faithful blue terrier that I had been meaning to purchase for ever so long in spite of the price and for which I could never get up the money until it had vanished from the window of the pet shop. Moreover, the detective dispensed his wisdom modestly, and I will admire him for this one day, but in the meantime I have decided to strike out on my own.

I will have to find them, the burglars. I do not want vengeance, nor do I really care who they were. It is not even important they be stopped; it will eventually be clear that stopping them is not possible in this life, though perhaps it used to be in the next. What is of primary interest to me is that I discover once and for all everything they have taken. If I can discover that, then I will be content.

I will not attempt to inquire further. Into the Why, for example. The Why did not interest me so much. The Why is another story. Or a song perhaps. This is not clear.

Also I would like to know what they will take in the future. Then I can put these things on the doorstep and save them the trouble of climbing the fire escape and breaking the window lock. I like to make life easier for people, specially burglars, because as a class they are universally despised. Anyway they

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do not burgle because they need the ridiculous objects they take, no more than I myself will need them when I am wiser. What does a burglar need with my typewriter? Did he want to type out the story of his life? I think this is admirable. And it was of great benefit to society that he did, but he didn't, so we are all in the dark still. Yet there he was, lurking in the shadows, laughing to himself. I left the room, shutting the light, and will leave him alone. Now he can take the typewriter without embarrassment to either of us, and begin his autobiography at once. Since I will discover tomorrow, however, that he does not know how to type, has no intention of learning, and moreover that he hasn't even got an autobiography, properly speaking, then I see it was a senseless project from the outset.

Locating the burglars will be difficult. My neighbors are shadowy and none of them are above suspicion, which runs very high in this part of the city, and very deep as well. Not even the dead are above suspicion. Only the angels are above suspicion, my sister says, but then she blushes, because she is delicate and hypersensitive and believes, I think, that she has no right to speak the word angels. Ever since she began the history book that she has given up reading, she came to the conclusion that speaking the word angels will be lewd and symptomatic of a mental disease, and that is why she doesn't mention them anymore in the prayer she tries to remember every night on her knees at the bedside when she thought she was alone.

She occasionally thinks that I too am above suspicion. But I am not above anything as high as that. I have been forgetting myself lately. Many people at work remark on the fact. My supervisor, a frail, nervous, fair-haired youth, will do so increasingly. There is something rude and coarse in my tone when I spoke to him.

"Robert," he said, "you are forgetting yourself!"

I know he is right and I was appalled. Was it I myself who was burglarizing the apartment? I repair to my desk and bury my face in my hands trying to remember. Such a long distance of time will have to be traversed, however, that it takes

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me the better part of the day; by five o'clock I accomplish nothing, but am paid all the same.

I am often paid "all the same." In the future I will refuse this pay, however, and go hungry in moderation. But my brother, who is a musician, thinks that because I refuse the pay I despise him and everybody. Therefore I told him I will take the pay, after all, and we continued on excellent terms, my brother and I, until today when he suggested that I request a raise in salary. Then I laughed. And as I could see he wanted to be rid of me, I went out into the street where I am wanted.

I am wanted for murder and other petty crimes. No doubt I can fulfill these wants of the street, but won't, and I stand firm on this point even though it has begun to rain and the pedestrians are running in all directions.

In the end it was my downstairs neighbor Evers who found me and drew me indoors. He led me up to the couch in my apartment and brought a cup of hot chocolate. He said I was wet through and through. But this isn't so, as I am dry inside. All the same, I didn't protest, because even though it is good to enter into conversation with him, it is better to enter alone.

He heard about my burglary and gives me excellent advice. He recommends putting a wire across my doorway before bedtime, and razor blades on the bottoms of the windows. I see his idea and will certainly turn it over.

And this I did for a long time after he left. Also I sat by the window. At midnight my brother stopped in to tell me that I had changed. He was worried and grave but I knew he was right. And he too has changed. He has grown thin and I saw him disappear when I shut my eyes. I think it was the music that made him thin. One day he will write a song about nothing and fly away with it and then he will have changed quite perfectly. He is behind on his rent, though, and is unhappy and ashamed. He is unhappy because I have changed, and he is ashamed because he has come again to borrow money. It disconcerts him to borrow money now that we have both changed.

The burglars, however, have no such scruples. They will continue their game no matter how much I change. Even after

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I change into myself they will continue. Or perhaps not; this is debatable; but with whom will I debate? Occasionally the burglars debate, but they are difficult to pin down and are contradictory and humorous on principle. As soon as I win a point in the discussion and am about to congratulate myself, I discover that something of value is gone again, and the burglars—who but a moment ago were somewhere in the room and debating so amiably—are running off into the night. I go to the window and see them in the distance, climbing the fire escape of the house across the yard.

But of course at this point I grew weary because it became clear that they were nothing, nothing but figures of speech. I crawled into bed and put myself to sleep with a resolution to begin afresh tomorrow and to have no more truck with them.

And I didn't. In the morning light I rose like a king and called everything I saw by its true name.

* * *

But it wasn't as easy as it sounds. The true names began to slip out of my mind even before breakfast and I saw last night's resolution in a new light. That I should begin afresh in the morning and have no more truck with burglars was merely a clever lie which would help me fall asleep. When I was a child it was the lie that the light in the corridor will still be on after I shut my eyes which used to help me fall asleep, but now I am wiser and if I want to put one over on myself at night, I have to get up quite early in the morning. So I did. Then I telephone my supervisor to tell him I am sick.

"You have used up all of your sickness, Robert," he replies, "and your job is in danger."

This, however, I have always known, but the danger was never great enough, and he knew this better than I and was very sad. That is why I put the receiver back on the hook gently and sat by the window. All day I sat by the window and looked at my mind and I thought it was like a string of pearls that I had stolen from people whose names I forget unsuccessfully.

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In the evening my brother arrives and takes me to a meeting which was held in the apartment of my downstairs neighbor Evers. There is a tremendous crowd of twenty or twenty-five people. They live on the block and I recognize all of them. The meeting is about many things. Mainly it is about how to do away with the burglars. Therefore I wanted to leave but my brother told me that I will be rude to Evers if I leave. I was convinced that he was right, but when I will tell him later that on the other hand I was rude to the burglars if I stay, he won't understand, so I said nothing, which begins to be repetitious, however, and may give my neighbors ideas.

"I don't think you will be able to do away with the burglars," I said at last.

"Maybe not," said Evers, "but it's worth a try, isn't it?"

I didn't answer; I bit my lip because three men will climb in the window and smile. They will take the string of pearls that used to look like my mind and hold it up before the company for ridicule. There was considerable laughter over that. Evers alone didn't laugh, as he is humorless. He looks directly into my eyes in earnest and waits for an answer, so I had to wait with him. Then the three men leave the way they will come and nobody made an effort to stop them. I was glad to be rid of the pearls once and for all. In the morning I would thank the three men but never saw them again.

Then I was pensive. I let Evers wait for the answer alone; I go to the window and hear the meeting at my back. There is talk of sickness, low talk. But I hear it, so I turn around at once and tell everybody that my supervisor has just informed me that I have used up all of my sickness and that they can confirm this fact with him first thing in the morning. They are bewildered and my brother takes me by the arm but I feign a fit of passion and push him away vigorously. This is the only language he and the others understand and they are at once apologetic and timid, much too timid. Also they are sly. They wink at one another and begin speaking to me as if I were a child again. That, however, is wishful thinking on their part and they are deceiving themselves. I don't know how long it took me to get to the door, but when I got there

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I wanted my sister to take my hand, but she went away with the angels a long time ago. Oh yes, I knew quite well what they are up to, these people. They will have meetings; they will decide to do away with burglars and fail, and fail again, and tell one another they have succeeded. I ran out into the hall casually, so as not to attract much notice and also beg Evers to forgive me for leaving early.

"I have to get up in the morning," I said.

He understood all too well and was deeply hurt. He is a nice man with ugly hands which ruin an otherwise perfect face. He is tall and has a tiny beard. He teaches rapid-reading at a rate of pay that insults him, but he has ambition and I predict he will go far afield. I kissed him tenderly on the forehead as I was going up the staircase, but he continues talking in an even voice in his apartment and takes no notice.

* * *

By midnight I knew what time it was. I sat in my room in the dark and the meeting continued below. I could hear the words but the floor separated me from what they meant. They were like an opera in a foreign tongue—a grand opera, I think, about murder and other wonders which are easier done than said. I understood everything perfectly. I rose from my chair and began to pace the room and my footsteps fell on deaf ears for a long time, when suddenly I hear that laugh which I knew so well as a child but never heard before.

It comes from the apartment above and I know who it is. We had been passing each other on the stairs for many years without speaking because we didn't want anything to come between us. I know her name from the tag on the mailbox and will bide my time until the meeting broke up below. But then I couldn't hear the laugh anymore because people were talking in the hall. Evers' voice rose above the rest like an eagle and I was glad, glad for him.

My brother came up to see me after they left. I looked at him through the spyhole in my door and he saw my right eye but I saw all of him; also I began to hear the laugh again,

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so I told him I am asleep. This hurt him, however, and he said he is worried about me. But he isn't; he is worried about my right eye.

"Go home and write a song," I said.

He took my advice and it will be a popular song if it were sung properly.

But it wasn't, so I put on a clean shirt and a simple tie and went upstairs. I stood by her door and hear the laugh. Also I hear her talking softly to her baby whose red carriage I have admired in the street. I think it is good she has him to wake her and laugh with at this hour. I will be glad to laugh with him myself. But things being what they are, I ought not to laugh. It wasn't appropriate. And she herself divined this at once because she is a woman of fine sensibilities and flung open the door which demanded an explanation of me so unexpectedly that to this day I am standing there and looking into her eyes for the just word.

In the end I had to let the open doorway frame an answer. It was like a picture of myself with a flag in my hand. But I knew this was unsatisfactory. We both did. Which is why she felt sorry for me perhaps, and took me in.

Of course, this was my own fault entirely. I had been taken in so many times in the past that I ought really to have been more careful; I think I had been taken in by every trick in the book. And it was an unforgettable book. I read it as a youth and know it like the back of my mind. Truly I had only myself to blame, so I sat in the chair she gave me and told her lies. They are lies about the burglars, though, and may have some foundation.

I told her that I saw the burglars on the fire escape looking through her window. Therefore I had to telephone the police who suggested that I keep her company until help arrives. But as there are too many crimes in the city tonight, help may not arrive till morning. However, I will think twice before I tell her this because her eyes will be speculative. After all, she wasn't an idiot. I saw that at once. She was a woman of insight and humor.

"Why don't you lie down on the sofa," she said, for example.

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So I did. Then she brought a little cotton sack filled with ice and put it on my forehead and will draw the window shade against the night.

"Don't," I said. And she knew why at once. She let the window shade be and walked across the room like someone I don't know but would like to, because the hem of her skirt goes to the left as her hips go to the right, and then the hem of her skirt goes to the right as her hips go to the left, and so on and so forth, until she disappeared into the bedroom with the baby.

When she came back without it, she was alone. We both were. And I heard the breathing of her husband in the next room. He will desert her some day a long time ago. I took the bag of ice off my head and went into his room to settle the matter before complications arise. Hannah began to tug at my arm but I told her that I will wake him if she persists and she did. Also the baby began to cry but it wasn't hers. It was mine from a previous marriage on the other side of the street which I ducked out of at the last minute. Then a police car passed and the siren was like the cry of a fish out of water. This will be the signal for the husband to rise. He will rise and walk toward me over the expanse of white linen forever. He will shine and the night will grow calm and I know who he is. He is the ghost of a chance I never took and reminds me of my sister. I began to laugh and he disappears to frighten us by the dark.

Then I took Hannah in my arms to protect her from the fear in my mind but she is proud. She would not stay near me. Looking into my eyes, she put the fingertips of her right hand upon her lower lip and walked backwards like a dancer in the old ballet. This reminded me of Paris, and also Vienna, Salzburg and Odessa, because I had never been to those places. However, I was well-known on the continent, and also admired until the recent misunderstandings.

They were the result of something. I knew this as well as I know myself. Therefore I tell Hannah I must use her telephone at once.

"Everyone is asleep at this hour, Robert," she said.

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I will tell her that it is much earlier on the continent but she said she would not let me call the continent because of the expense. This amazed me as I knew the operator would not ask for money, but Hannah said there is a bill at the end of the month. However, I did not believe in the end of the month at the time. Hannah immediately became righteous and said that people who do not believe in the end of the month are excommunicated from the Bell Telephone. This made me blush and I will put my hand forward. I will touch the inside of her left thigh with the fingertips of my right hand and she smiles and let her eyelids drop. Then I will touch her under the ear with the tip of my tongue because her hair was done up in a ponytail. She put her left arm between us; it was pointing down; also it will be stiff at the elbow which was against her belly; her palm was open and will close around a part of me and hold it gently. Her mouth makes me think of a pretty little animal in warm water and I will enter it someday when she kneels before me and I went into her everywhere at once like three men. Moreover, I am happy to announce that I wept when she lay on the floor because all her mouths were opening and closing like a certain season whose name escapes me. This will not be tolerated by the authorities, though, because I do not know the proper name of the season. The authorities will say that I am sick with prudence. They will say also that I am lying when I said that I enter her like three men. But they are mistaken. Because when I say I enter her like three men, I am not lying, I am singing *Melancholy Baby*!

Hannah told me to be quiet, however, because I may wake up something. Also she said I had a bad voice and that I wasn't singing the words right. Anyway she did not like the song to begin with. She did not say it all straight out, but I knew what was behind her solicitations and I went back down the stairs. In fact, I will not go up the stairs in the first place. What is the use, really, if the whole affair is going to end with insults?

* * *

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It was dark as usual. Evers was out there now with his gang and they will join up with the burglars. I will go out and put a stop to it again and again. Except that the street is too far away and I could not reason with the distance which lay there stretched out like a dead man between me and all the bloody work that is going on.

I have determined nevertheless to be happy. Hannah has told me that I must, and my sister said that it is a sin to be sad. Also my brother said that a happy man will change the world.

I see his point. I see it with my naked eye. It is very far away like a great star. However, I have been considering it with unflagging seriousness for so long now that I had forgotten that my brother was the one who originally made it. Perhaps he himself has forgotten. Certainly his behavior lately would indicate that he has. However, I don't put much stock in behavior. Now that Evers has joined up with the burglars, they will be murdering women and children and men of all ages with such astonishing regularity that any behavior is open to question like a wound and should be taken with a grain of salt. I don't like it. In fact, I think it is very deep.

I think many other things as well. I think that I is a most impersonal pronoun and only a figure of speech. I think I is like the burglars and is no more than one of the thinnest letters in the alphabet. I think I reminds me of a hungry man, and I will write ninety-nine cantos about him in an expansive mode. And those of you who design kingdoms will understand what I am speaking about just as clearly as if I had not spoken at all.

I know now that the end is surely coming. It is coming from far away beyond the shadow of a doubt. When it arrives, the last murder will be done. It will be done like a man, in one stroke. Then the burglars will quit. They will drape themselves in black and bring tiger lilies and other ferocious ideas to the place where I lie, and I will rest content. I think my only regret will be that I had but one life to give for my country, because if I had a lot more I would save a couple for myself. In a word, it will be all right. It will be right as rain that never lets up and there will be no more burglary anywhere that I know of.

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The Stand-in

Gerald Jonas and Jean Marple

"My client is feeling very insecure this week," Stebbins said, swinging his feet up onto the leather couch, leaning his head back against the paper antimacassar, and lighting up a large cigar.

"Yes?" the doctor said, in a deep baritone rumble from somewhere behind Stebbins. "And what has he been thinking and feeling?"

"Frankly, he's worried about his mother's visit," Stebbins said, glancing at the little blue notebook he had propped against his rising and falling waistline. "His mother's visits always remind him of his sister-in-law who came to stay with the family when he was three. She was always put up in his room, and he had to sleep under the front stairs with the brooms."

"Brooms?" the rumble noted. "Any associations?"

"Dirt," Stebbins said quietly, and then he paused, as if reluctant to go on. "You're quite right, doctor," he said, turning to flip an ash from his cigar into a saucer placed on the floor beside him. "With the life he's been leading lately, he feels that somehow he has been snuffing the candle at both ends. On the one hand, he *wants* his mother to stay with him, but on his other hand, he feels that every time she comes, he has to take her to a Broadway musical, and that costs. His father, as we know," Stebbins continued, consulting his notebook, "used to beat him with a silk scarf whenever he spent his allowance too fast. Money is still a *big* problem."

The rumble broke into a deep cough. "I've been meaning

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to ask you," it said, with just a trace of its Venezuelan accent, "that is, I mean, to ask your client—Mr. L., my patient..." (More coughing) "Naturally, I was wondering about his strong resistance to my fees. This whole problem with money... perhaps, as a start, you could tell me how much he pays you for *your* services?"

Stebbins sat bolt upright on the couch. "Please, doctor," he said. "There is one thing that I will not have. My financial arrangements with my client are a matter of strictest confidence. There will be no discussion of these matters. None! I'm sure you understand. As a professional man yourself..."

* * *

Jack Stebbins had been, in one capacity or another, a professional stand-in since he was six years old—when his parents had rented him out to childless couples for visits to the Children's Zoo. At eight, he had been a back-stop baby-sitter for older children too busy to care for their charges on Saturday nights. At nine, he had walked dogs for other people; and at ten, he had served as a delivery boy for a diaper service during the Christmas rush. Throughout his high school years, he had willingly loaned his civics papers and chemistry laboratory reports to younger students, and on one occasion, he helped his sister pass Home Economics by knitting her mid-semester argyles, and baking an A-minus Linzer Torte final. At college, he often stood in for his roommate on blind dates arranged by the roommate's myopic great-aunt in Detroit; and twice, he put on dark glasses and make-up to sit in at language examinations for his friends. (It was at this point that his fees began to constitute a modest livelihood.)

Upon graduation, Stebbins managed to avoid the draft by borrowing a portfolio of x-rays from an uncle with flat feet, and the following summer, he sublet a bachelor apartment in New York, where he picked up spare cash in the evenings by holding a place in line for hungry standees outside the Metropolitan Opera House. His big break came when one of the

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regular standees confessed that someone had given him tickets to that evening's recital by the Electric Moog in Bryant Park, and asked Stebbins, not only to hold his usual place in line, but also (for an additional sum) to attend the opera for him.

"I've been waiting all year to hear Stiegmutz in *Die Traumsitzen*," he said, "and even if I can't go in person, I'd hate to feel I'd missed the performance entirely."

Stebbins accepted the assignment, reported that Stiegmutz was getting a bit "reachy" in the upper register, deplored the ballet sequence—and found that he had begun a new phase of his career.

Within a few weeks, he had become a familiar figure at the New York Philharmonic, the Met, the YMHA Poetry Center, testimonial barbecues for West Village Republicans—and other functions of the sort that make the original ticket holder feel that his personal attendance is optional, but his opinion is mandatory. One evening, a gentleman whose wife Stebbins had several times escorted to the family box at Cafe la Mama called him with a new proposal.

"Stebbs," he said, "it's an awkward thing. Molly signed up last August for one of those charter flights. Her women's club is going on a nine-day Perfume Appreciation Tour of the major capitals of Europe. Now I've persuaded her to go bog-fishing with me in Western Canada instead. The problem is this: unless they can get someone to sit in the twenty-fifth seat, they'll lose the charter rate. So Molly suggested..."

The details were quickly arranged. Stebbins parted from the touring ladies as soon as the plane touched down in Geneva. Having observed that the ladies were occupied during the entire flight in writing postcards home, Stebbins was struck with a plan, which subsequently took shape as The Agency. That evening he placed an ad in the Paris Edition of the World Journal Tribune:

> Correspondence undertaken. Letters to relatives, friends, business associates? Let The Agency write them for you. You supply names, addresses, degree of intimacy, de-

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> sired mailing drops. We provide everything from travel clichés ("Wish you were here," "Send more money") to sensitive *aperçus* ("The Croats have lost their sculpted profiles and valiant devotion to the soil.") The Agency, 13 Rue Scribe. Stebbins.

Another breakthrough. Within a short time, Stebbins' clientele included functionally illiterate businessmen from small towns who felt obliged to write to the entire membership of their Lions Clubs; brilliant engineering students on travel grants, who felt obliged to express great longings for their fiancées back home; and even a girl (actually living in Cornwall with a Prussian *ober-couturier*), who felt obliged to post dutiful letters from a Lausanne boarding school to her parents in Providence. Stebbins soon turned over The Agency to qualified assistants, and went home to begin his new—and even more challenging—assignment.

* * *

"My client would like to say that he's furious this week," Stebbins said, waving a lighted cigar above his face in great agitation.

"Yes?" said the doctor, coughing sotto voce.

Stebbins drew on his cigar, exhaled a blue cloud of smoke, and said nothing.

"Yes?" said the doctor again, more gently.

"Frankly," Stebbins said, tapping the fingers of his cigar hand on the wall beside him, "he feels that lately you haven't been paying attention. Last Wednesday, for instance, you hardly seemed to be listening. He finds that nervous coughing of yours..."

"Yes?" the doctor said.

"...particularly distracting."

"Well." The doctor cleared his throat. "Actually, I have been meaning to bring this up for some time. You must

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realize that a cigar in an enclosed space often stimulates a coughing reflex in the non-smoker."

"Frankly, doctor," said Stebbins, half turning around to look at the doctor's now florid face, "that sounds like a rationalization. Any opera buff knows that a coughing audience is a bored audience."

"I only meant to suggest," the doctor said, "that perhaps we could dispense with that particular prop for our fifty minutes together."

"I'm afraid that's out of the question," said Stebbins, staring up at the ceiling and flicking off another half inch of ash. "I rarely smoke myself, but my client finds it impossible to talk freely without a cigar."

"Yes?" said the doctor, with renewed interest. "Perhaps we should investigate that further?"

"I don't think we have the time," Stebbins said, consulting his watch. "For the moment, I've been instructed to respond to your last week's apparent rejection with a two-minute sulk."

"You are aware, of course," the doctor said, "that what you are doing at this moment is what we call Acting Out."

Stebbins stared at his watch and said nothing.

The session ended ten seconds before the sulk was over, but the doctor chose not to interrupt. When Stebbins had sat up again, and extinguished his cigar, the doctor clapped his notebook shut, opened his eyes, and said, "I have another patient waiting in the outer office, Mr. Stebbins, but I wonder if I might talk to *you*—personally—for just a moment."

"Yes?" Stebbins said.

"Frankly," the doctor said, "I should like to consult you about a problem of my own. I shall find it impossible to attend any of my regular sessions next week. I have been asked to deliver a paper—my own—at a meeting of the American Psittacotical Association in Tampa, and I wonder whether you might, in a professional capacity..." (he coughed) "...as it were, stand in for me."

"I don't see why not," Stebbins said, after a moment's reflection. "My client is returning to the city on Saturday morning, and that should leave me free..."

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"The fee, of course..." the doctor began.

"Of course," Stebbins said.

Experience always tells. Stebbins found that standing-in for the doctor was no more difficult than the escorting, delivering, sitting, knitting, baking, taking, dating, writing, and free associating, which had marked the earlier stages of his career. His only problem was, as he conceived it, an ethical one: what to do about Transference Phenomena? If his patients transferred their transference to him, they might have trouble retransferring their referents when the unsuspecting doctor returned from his conference. But Stebbins felt that he could handle it. His confidence had increased to such a degree that he was not even disturbed when, on Wednesday morning, he received the following telegram:

In Barcelona monastery stop Flat broke stop
Suffering *dos cornadas* stop High fever stop
Cannot return before Monday stop

L.

Stebbins immediately recognized the economical cable style of the Catalan bureau of his agency (he knew that his client L. was not in Barcelona at all, but was actually conducting a torrid romance on the ski slopes of the Stavangerfjord.) There was the problem of L.'s six o'clock session with the doctor, but Stebbins thought about it for a moment, and decided there was no real reason for concern.

* * *

The regular janitor in the Syndrome Building, having gone to a matinee at two, had asked his brother-in-law Charlie to take his place for the afternoon. At six o'clock, Charlie was polishing the leaves of a split-philodendron in the deserted hallway on the seventh floor, when he noticed a light shining through the transom above the door to the doctor's waiting room. The room itself was empty. Charlie turned off the light, and stretched out on a hassock for a little nap, when he thought he heard mumbling coming from the inner office. He opened the door a crack, and peered in.

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Settled comfortably in a chair, with his feet up on the leather couch, was a gentleman with a cigar in one hand, a pencil in the other, and two notebooks propped against his rising and falling waistline. He was talking to himself. Charlie backed away from the door, tiptoed through the waiting room, and raced down the hall to the telephone.

"Hello. Hello Operator?" he said. "I want to report a nut."

When the police arrived, Stebbins rose graciously to his feet.

"Yes?" he said.

"You better come with us, fella," the larger of the two policemen said.

"Which one of us do you want?" Stebbins asked, waving the cigar and pencil. "My client is in a Catalonian monastery, and the doctor is in Tampa. But in either case, officer, I hardly think..."

"That's all right, fella," the policeman said. "I'm afraid you better come along now."

"Where are we going?" Stebbins asked.

"Where would you like to go?" the officer (who had majored in psychology at the police academy) said kindly.

"To Surrogate's Court?" Stebbins suggested, and giggled.

The policemen exchanged a glance, lunged forward, and seized Stebbins by a wrist and an ankle.

"There'll be no violence, fella," the smaller of the two policemen said, tightening his grip on Stebbins' ankle. "Where you're going, you can talk to yourself as much as you want."

Stebbins nodded slowly, and straightened his tie with his free hand. Experience always tells.

"Get me a mouthpiece," he said.

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David Hockney

Notes for Illustrations: Grimm's Fairy Tales

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Two versions of glass mountain

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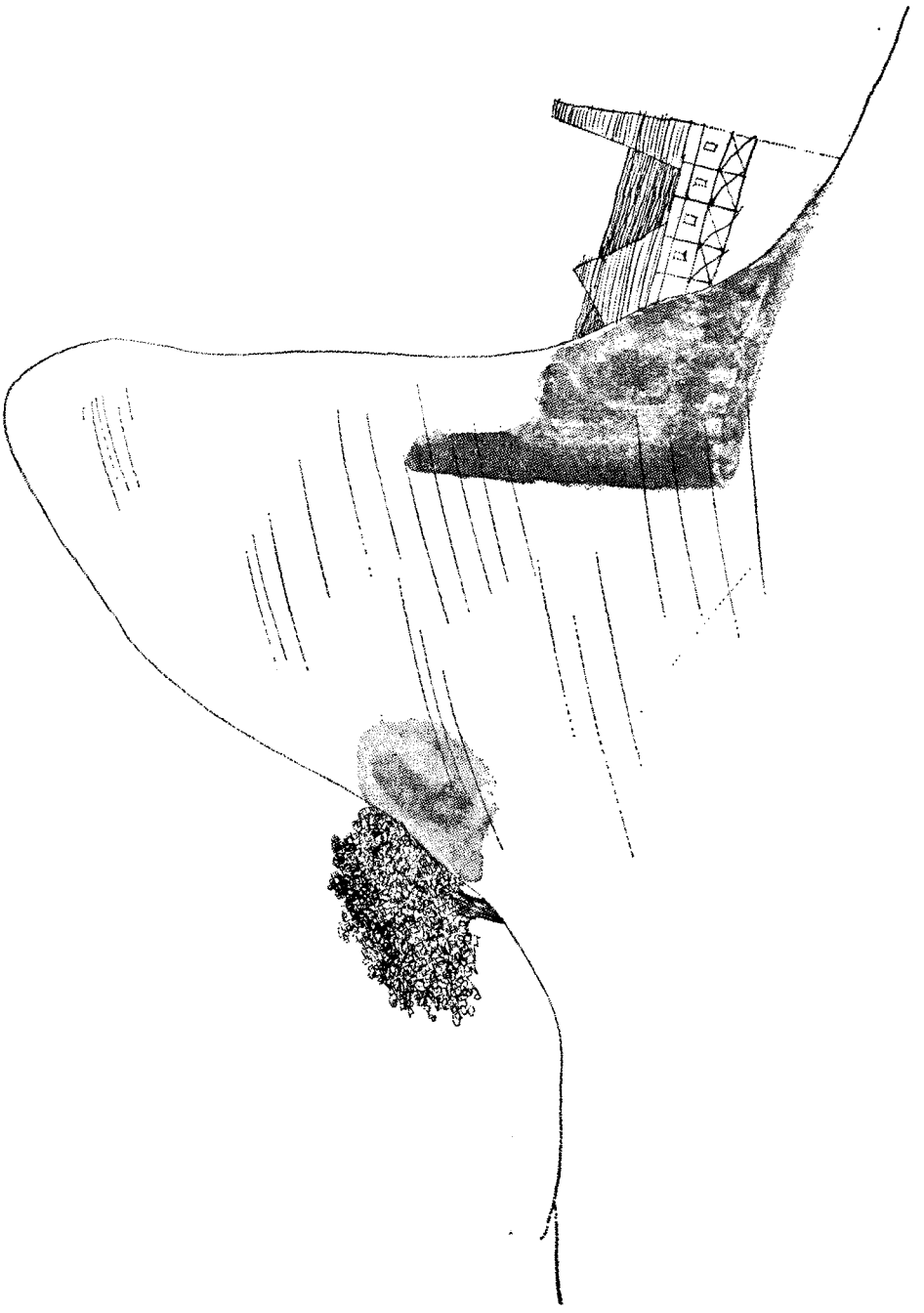

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Rumpelstiltskin and pig

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Rumpelstiltskin

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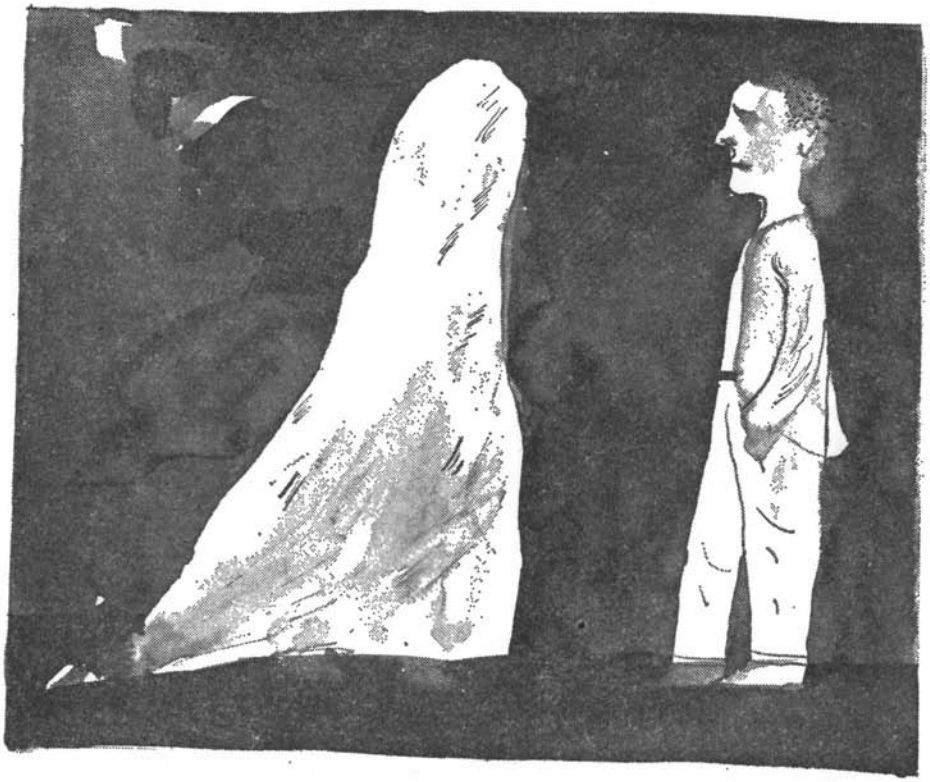

The boy who wanted to know what fear is

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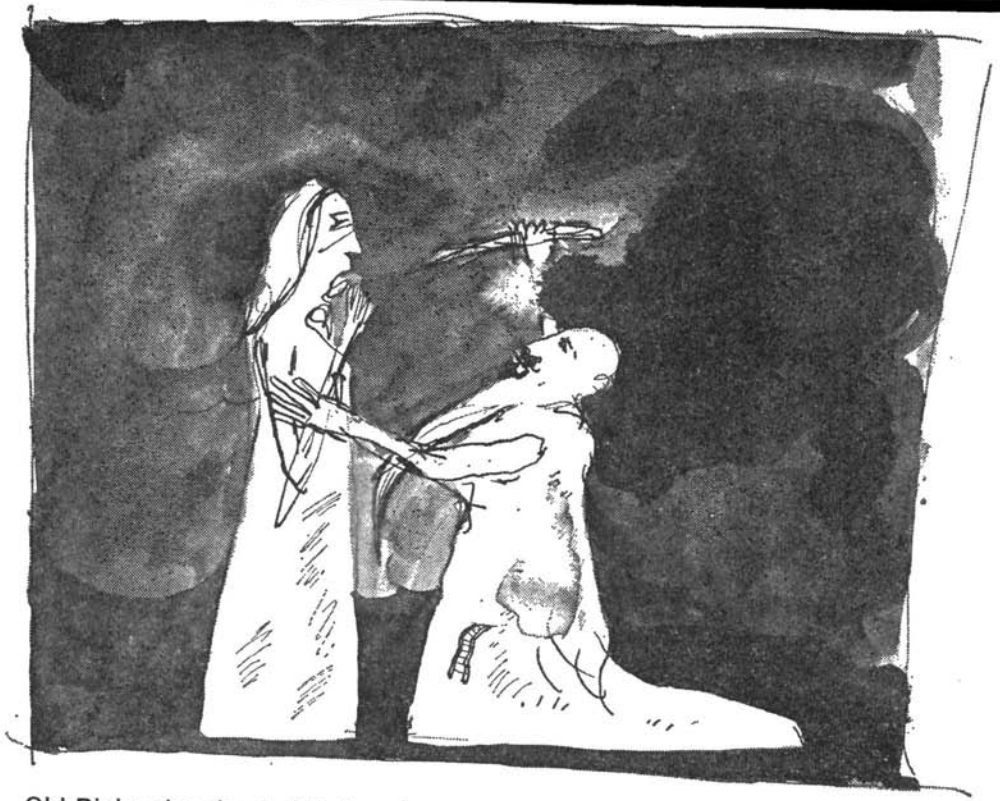

Old Rinkrank trying to kill the princess

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Hilton Obenzinger

Prologue to my Brains

Ah well, I walk out into the road all fancied up.
I must admit I feel fine. But, you see,
A statement of this sort is misleading.
To say "I feel fine" is to assume
That a missing link looms in that feeling.
Ideally, one should liquidate that missing link.
I went by the white picket fence. Less
Than a day in paradise. Already I feel
The common light of the celestials around me.
I asked an angel, the prettiest that ever wore
Blonde hair, "Is there a cafe nearby, my Angel?"
He answered, "Down the road two miles.
The waitress there, I know her. She is very sweet.
I am sure she will want to take
A photograph of you. You are probably
The first boy with long hair she's ever seen."
In the restaurant, listening to C. C. Rider
On the juke box, I remembered that it was
Exactly two years previous that I wrote the song.
The prim waitress squeezed the shutter,
And my first impulse was to cover up what
I was thinking about. The Bighorn Mountains
Came up on the clouds. What fresh Wyoming air!
But let me return to what I was discussing earlier.
Too many people in the world fill up their time
Doing evil things. When I write
Sometimes I find it hard to assume their roles.
Surely I am an evildoer too. Where did I spend
Those 7 hours? I spent them in
Hollywood with you. Then I climbed
Up with my friends the breezy California coast.

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"Mrs. Bodampa, tell your child to play
By his own house." How many times have you
Heard that when you were a child?
How tedious that type of thinking is, after all.
We are all evildoers. It is unreasonable
And proper to hate each other.
And we should, if that's what we really do.
I would like to sit awhile, looking at you,
And talk about all the tiresome things we do.
Well, that is what we heard on top of the cliff.
Alan furiously began taking the hill apart.
He threw chunks into the raging Pacific waters.
His curly black hair made sparks rubbing against
His anger as he threw them. But I don't
Mean that anything disturbing was meant by this gesture.
I am sure Alan felt the friendship everyone had right there.
And how it would last for years.
He was moving with the rocks and the trees
And the daffodil under the rock.
We all picked up rocks and threw them overboard
Until we disappeared on top of our rock.
Precious minutes and we would be gone!
And we should, if that's what we really do.

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Laurance Wieder

Water is the Mother of Ice

Then love introduces the expensive dream
Of peace into this last report on the future

Of the past, as the pen snaps
Into the gentle discipline.

If it weren't necessary to eat, I wouldn't
And if I didn't have to brace

Myself against fire and ice I would
By all means, relax.

But it's that negligence which leaves the body
Open and the hand gasping for comfort

In the middle of nightmares: certainly
I have lived too long in an atmosphere of hatred.

Discipline propels me through the arid superstructure
Insisting "stop and think, pick and choose"

While nothing is satisfied,
Not morning's bleary mirror

Or the later mirror of this afternoon.
This afternoon is colored natural to life.

This afternoon is warranted to neither fade nor spot.
This afternoon is excelled by none in the Union.

It presents the likenesses of children
In from two to four seconds, sitting

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And I will not flatter my humble self—
It is a lot better than I am.

Improvements in poetry have not matched
Corresponding improvements in business,

And my life reflects an even further halting.
There was a time I didn't notice I was alone.

II

What I want compares to the ancients
Who kept records on slabs of stone,

Aiming for a permanence which I
Can only dream of.

Faces flip past like pictures in a book,
Too fast to take a closer look, but

Not fast enough to be ignored.
It doesn't pay to go out for a walk.

It leaves me describing my condition
In leaves or flocks of birds, my feelings

Taking on the aspect of a mountain or river,
Massive, natural, subject to the sun and moon,

Independent of the will. The will
Implies both a future, and a backward glance:

The wishes of the dead are remarkably strong:
They are the breezes of the present life

And buffet the living, like leaves or flocks
Of birds migrating north after a long winter

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To cooler regions. And these breezes which intend
To abolish chance create it, and although

The winds can be felt, they too are invisible
As chance, electric, the probable air.

What do I want? I want to leave
Something behind me which is not will,

Which does not challenge the workings of the planets
Or the heart, but includes them, and chance as well

In a breath. Water is the mother of ice
And land of the fish. The sun

Is the mask of evening. Ice, bark of the rivers
And vault of the waves visits in a cold time

And vanishes in a hot season, which equals
The sun. I keep the dull and weekly hours,

Record the natural equations, and decorate
The earth with songs to draw the strings

Of my relations, which tie me to other men,
To the earth, my own body, and the stars.

It is four o'clock in the afternoon.

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John Godfrey

Sonnet

On the Elements

Who cares if something simple happens in a complicated
manner? I could fall off a rock and only shake myself
up. There might be some very delicate maneuvers
involved in that fall to a generous spread of dirt and
maybe a flourishing bog. But only emotions are brought

to the page. The sun goes on falling, leaving a countryside
to be illuminated in some other fashion, every single
moment. It rains in fascinating concentrations all over
the face of the earth. We say good night to the sun
and get out umbrellas and galoshes in such unearthly
innocence.

One of these mornings we'll get up and the weather will
be much different and much worse. We will be momentarily

annoyed. We will not for one moment be alarmed. We
understand how the universe works because we think it's
complicated.

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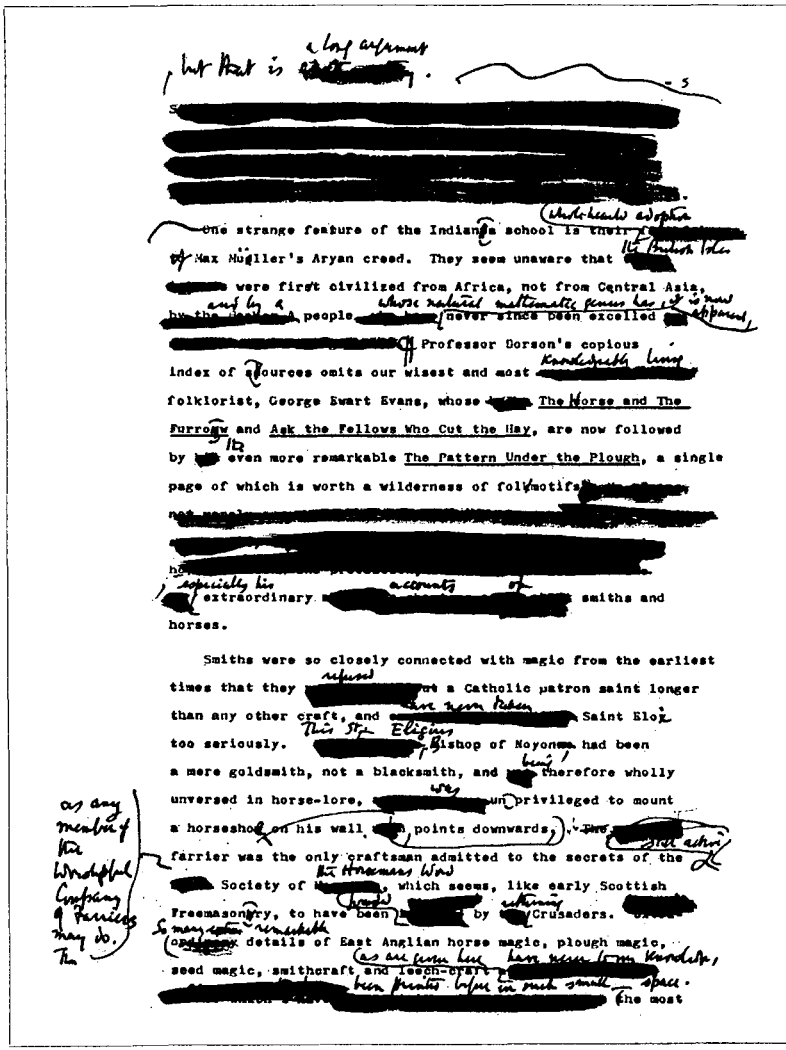

Manuscript page

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The Art of Poetry XI

Robert Graves

Dressed in corduroys, mariner's sweater, black horsehide jacket, and with a blanket wrapped around his middle, Robert Graves rolled his own cigarettes and chain-smoked throughout the interview. Reading glasses hung from his neck on a ribbon which frequently became tangled in his hair. Tall, loosely built, Graves has always been physically powerful, but as result of a climbing accident during his schooldays he cannot swivel his head and therefore uses a

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reading stand—fidgeting it into strategic positions on the desk in front of him while he talked. Tins of small Dutch cigars, jars of tobacco, marbles, pencils and porcelain clown heads are on the desk. There is a carton brimming with press clippings on the floor. Over the fireplace is a shelf with the works of T.E. Lawrence; on the mantel, Greek, Roman, Oriental and African figurines. "This dial of wood? From a tree hewn in Shakespeare's yard." He fingered it, spoke of continuity. He knew Hardy, and Hardy knew—

Gertrude Stein first told Robert Graves about Majorca. Except for the Civil War years, he has lived in Deyá since 1929. He and Laura Riding built the stone house he now occupies, and they lived in it together until 1936. There is an orchard with fifteen kinds of fruit trees, a large vegetable garden, and an English-style lawn of Bermuda grass.

Robert Graves is the author of over one hundred books, besides a number of anonymous rewrite jobs for friends. His most important prose work is The White Goddess, *a history of poetic myth—"the language of poetic myth... was a magical language bound up with popular religious ceremonies in honour of the Moon Goddess, or Muse... and this remains the language of 'true' poetry... in the sense of being the unimprovable original, not a synthetic substitute." The true poet worships the White Goddess, or goddess of creation; unswerving and absolute devotion to her is the poet's only path. He "falls in love, absolutely, and his true love for her is the Muse's embodiment." The present Muse is fifty-two years younger than Graves—"but we are the same age" ... "I am at the top of my manic cycle because good things are happening to her just now." She is a classical dancer performing in a far-off city.*

At various times during the following interview, he was setting the table, correcting a manuscript, checking references, cutting his nails with an enormous pair of scissors, picking carrots, singing folk songs, and slicing beans. He was not an easy man to keep up with.

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GRAVES

Do you notice anything strange about this room?

INTERVIEWER

No.

GRAVES

Well, everything is made by hand—with one exception: this nasty plastic triple file which was given me as a present. I've put it here out of politeness for two or three weeks, then it will disappear. Almost everything else is made by hand. Oh yes, the books have been printed, but many have been printed by hand—in fact some I printed myself. Apart from the electric light fixtures, everything else is handmade; nowadays very few people live in houses where anything at all is made by hand.

INTERVIEWER

Does this bear directly on your creative work?

GRAVES

Yes: one secret of being able to think is to have as little as possible around you that is not made by hand.

INTERVIEWER

You once wrote that "the Muse-poet must die for the Goddess as the Sacred King did when a divine victim." In spite of all you've survived, do you still hold to this?

GRAVES

Yes. What nearly always happens is that the Muse finds it impossible to sustain the love of a poet and allies herself with a pretended poet who she knows is not a real one. Someone she can mother. I have given a picture of it in a poem called "Lack." The process starts again each time that there's a death of love, which is as painful as a real death. There's always a murderer about, always a "Lack" character. The King or poet represents growth, and the rival or tanist represents drought.

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INTERVIEWER

Surely long years of service to the Muse are rewarded.

GRAVES

The reward is becoming eventually attached to somebody who's not a murderess. I don't want to talk about it, because I don't want to tempt my luck.

INTERVIEWER

By definition your pursuit of the Muse cannot bring satisfaction. What has it given you?

GRAVES

It has brought me nearer and nearer to the center of the fire, so to speak.

INTERVIEWER

Your poems, especially your love poems, get more intense as you go on. Is that a function of age, or experience?

GRAVES

One gets to the heart of the matter by a series of experiences in the same pattern, but in different colors.

INTERVIEWER

In other words, you don't learn anything new, but you get a deeper understanding.

GRAVES

That's about it. An understanding of what the poet's ordeals are. Love poems must be bounced back off a moon. Moons vary. Love a different muse-woman and you get a different poem.

INTERVIEWER

What about that simple appetite, lust, which you have attacked?

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GRAVES

Lust involves a loss of virtue, in the sense of psychic power. Lust is giving away something that belongs to somebody else. I mean the act of love is a metaphor of spiritual togetherness, and if you perform the act of love with someone who means little to you, you're giving away something that belongs to the person you do love or might love. The act of love belongs to two people, in the way that secrets are shared. Hugs and kisses are permissible, but as soon as you start with what's called the mandalot—I invented the word, from the Greek; it comes from *mandalós* (which is the bolt you put in the socket) and means the tongue-kiss or by dictionary definition "a lecherous and erotic kiss"—you should reserve such familiarities only for those whom you really love. I'm on simple hugs-and-kisses terms with several friends. That's all right. But promiscuity seems forbidden to poets, though I do not grudge it to any non-poet.

INTERVIEWER

Can the experience of the Muse give felicity?

GRAVES

Not really. But what does? Felicity and pain always alternate. She serves as a focus and challenge. She gives happiness. Here I use the English language precisely—hap: happening. She gives hap; provides happening. Tranquility is of no poetic use. (The first to use Muse in the sense of White Goddess was Ben Jonson—then it dropped down into weakly meaning self-inspiration of young men.)

After experience of the untranquil Muse one may move on to the Black Goddess—for black is positive in the East and stands for wisdom. Can a white Muse become a black one, or must it be another Muse? That is difficult...

INTERVIEWER

They are all about of an age—

GRAVES

As a rule the Muse is one whose father has deserted her

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mother when she was young and for whom therefore the patriarchal charm is broken, and who hates patriarchy. She may grow to be very intelligent, but emotionally she is arrested at about the age of fourteen or fifteen.

INTERVIEWER

What is the Muse's reaction to the poet?

GRAVES

It's embarrassing in a way for a well-known poet to write poems to a girl. She may resent being made a part of literary history. In France it is different. Many a woman wants to be known as the last girl Victor Hugo slept with... I'm all against literary history. Sometimes that's the reason why a "great poem," one that occurs in all the anthologies, is bad. It is usually interesting to examine its history.

INTERVIEWER

You mean it's been manufactured for an event?

GRAVES

Yes.

INTERVIEWER

The White Goddess is a handbook and a shelter behind which all questions can be answered. Do you feel the need for a final definition of what you're up to?

GRAVES

The White Goddess and *The Nazarene Gospel Restored* are curious: I wrote the first to define the non-Jewish element in Christianity, especially the Celtic. And I wrote the second, with the help of the late Joshua Podro, to drive the Greek and Roman element out of what was a purely Jewish event. The curious result was that a special Early Christian Society got founded at Cambridge, based on the *Nazarene Gospel*, and various White Goddess religions started in New York State and California. I'm today's hero of the love-and-

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flowers cult out in the Screwy State, so they tell me: where hippies stop policemen in the street and say, "I adore you, officer." Also I get a number of letters from witches' covens, requesting flying ointment, magical recipes, and esoteric information.

INTERVIEWER

In the *Colophon to Love Respelt* you talk of the battlefield being deserted. Who won?

GRAVES

I meant that there was no occasion for further poems on the subject... The historical sequence of a man's poems has a general resemblance to the order in which they are written. Yet often one writes a poem a long time before, or long after, a thing happens. Autobiography doesn't correspond exactly with poetic sequence.

INTERVIEWER

You get the idea for a poem and then life catches up with it?

GRAVES

Or alternatively, you have omitted recording a poetic experience some time, and it occurs later. The words are already fixed in the storehouse of the memory. The poem is there at the origin, but at the seventh level of consciousness, and rises up gradually through each repeated revision. The rereading touches off the original hypnotic state, but expression is amplified.

INTERVIEWER

In what way amplified?

GRAVES

For example, by the dreams of the night, which are the real interpretations in the primitive mind of the events of the previous day. A poem is nonetheless present from the conception, from the first germ of it crossing the mind—it must

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be scratched for and exhumed. There is an element of timelessness. The leading atomic scientist in Australia agreed with me the other day that time does not really exist. The finished poem is present before it is written and one corrects it. It is the final poem that dictates what is right, what is wrong.

INTERVIEWER

Why did you not write war poems—of your trench experience in World War I like your friend Sassoon, and like Owen?

GRAVES

I did. But I destroyed them. They were journalistic. Sassoon and Wilfred Owen were homosexuals; though Sassoon tried to think he wasn't. To them, seeing *men* killed was as horrible as if you or I had to see fields of corpses of women.

INTERVIEWER

Your poems are very complete and personal statements. Are you not at all reticent about what you reveal?

GRAVES

You tell things to your friends that you don't put into print.

INTERVIEWER

But your audience...

GRAVES

Never use the word "audience." The very idea of a public, unless a poet is writing for money, seems wrong to me. Poets don't have an "audience": they're talking to a single person all the time. What's wrong with someone like Yevtushenko is that he's talking to thousands of people at once. All the so-called "great artists" were trying to talk to too many people. In a way, they were talking to nobody.

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INTERVIEWER

Hence your estimate of the English poets, whom you've criticized pretty heavily from the Poetry Chair at Oxford?

GRAVES

There are fifteen English poets—I am speaking precisely—in the history of listed literature who were real poets and not playing at it.

INTERVIEWER

Would you care to name them?

GRAVES

That wouldn't be polite.

INTERVIEWER

What do they have in common?

GRAVES

A source in the primitive. In the pre-rational.

INTERVIEWER

As you work at a poem, do you feel that you are in some sense matching?

GRAVES

What happens is this—if a hypnotist says "look at this ring" and you are hypnotized by looking at the ring, then if he produces that ring again any time afterwards you go down. So also if you're writing a poem and you come back to it next day, you're immediately rehypnotized and at it again at that level.

INTERVIEWER

Is it the physical circumstance? This room?

GRAVES

No, it's not the ambiance. The ambiance may help. It's the actual draft, which is yourself. That's the hypnotic ring.

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INTERVIEWER

And what happens if you don't "go down"?

GRAVES

That happened to me only yesterday. You can't force it intellectually. You spoil the poem. You mess it up. When you've worked through to the real poetic level, the connections webbing together every single word are quite beyond intellectual arrangement. A computer couldn't do it. You've got not merely sound and sense to deal with but the histories of the words, cross rhythms, the interrelation of all the meanings of the words—a complete microcosm. You never get it quite right but if you get it almost right it insulates itself in time. That's why real poems travel.

INTERVIEWER

One feels your poetry has become more and more urgent, especially in the love lyrics which begin late.

GRAVES

Don't forget that I began in the Victorian Era; I had a lot to throw off. My poetic system accords with the Irish of the eighth century A.D., which was untinctured by Rome and which passed over eventually into Wales. Where did it come from? From the East. The correspondence with Sufic poetry is immense. That accounts for my interest in Omar Khayyám —a very noble poet so mishandled by FitzGerald. Besides, one gradually ceases to take critics into account.

INTERVIEWER

Who got you to come to the Balearic Islands?

GRAVES

Gertrude Stein.

INTERVIEWER

What did you think of her?

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GRAVES

She had an *eye*. She used to say she had been the only woman in Picasso's life, that she had formed him. Maybe this was true; the other females were only round and about.

INTERVIEWER

The poem you've shown me just now, *The Thing To Be Said*, seems to sum up so much.

GRAVES

Even in *The Thing To Be Said*, which I am working on now, which is about the necessity of first statement and that treats obsessive revision as a disease of age, there are ten successive versions. To date. Yes. The thing to be said, *say* it.

INTERVIEWER

This immense, abrupt change. The late poetry—

GRAVES

Yes, that came when I was writing *The White Goddess*. (I wrote it in six weeks. It took me ten years to revise it. And I about tripled its length.) Suddenly I was answering ancient Welsh and Irish questions that had never been answered, and I didn't know how or why. It terrified me. I thought I was going mad. But those solutions haven't been disproved. Then someone sent me an article on the Irish tree alphabet and the footnote referred to Graves but not to me. It was my grandfather! And I hadn't even known he had investigated such things. I believe in the inheritance of skills and crafts—the inheritance of memory. They find now that if a snail eats another snail it gets that second snail's memory.

INTERVIEWER

How did you sum up such vast detail into your conclusions?

GRAVES

I didn't. I knew it at the outset, and then checked.

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INTERVIEWER

You certainly write Muse poetry and express great contempt for the Apollonian, which I take it is the logical or utilitarian stuff, but aren't your novels Apollonian?

GRAVES

My writing of prose was always thematically in line with my thought. Always myself, I never left that. That was always the background. For example, *They Hanged My Saintly Billy* was to show how Victorian England really was: how rotten, how criminal in contrast to the received version. I had a couple of good characters too, besides the bad.

INTERVIEWER

You write novels when stimulated by some historical problem. How do you go on from there?

GRAVES

I don't know. Some people have gifts, like a friend of mine who can balance a glass on his finger and make it turn round by just looking at it. I have the gift of being occasionally able to put myself back in the past and see what's happening. That's how historical novels should be written. I also have a very good memory for anything I want to remember, and none at all for what I don't want to remember. *Wife to Mr. Milton*—my best novel—started when my wife and I were making a bed in 1943 and I suddenly said: "You know, Milton must have been a trichomaniac"—meaning a hair-fetichist. The remark suddenly sprang out of my mouth. I realised how often his imagery had been trichomanic. So I read all I could find about him, and went into the history of his marriages. I'd always hated Milton, from earliest childhood; and I wanted to find out the reason. I found it. His jealousy. It's present in all his poems... Marie Powell had long hair with which he could not compete.

INTERVIEWER

I think you describe that precisely in the novel, when they are riding on the heath...

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GRAVES

He had the schoolmaster's disease. Constipation.

INTERVIEWER

You mean that literally?

GRAVES

Yes! of course I mean it literally! It shows in all his poetry. We know all about what he was given for it. Well, I had always smelt something, and then it all came to me more or less at once, and I wrote *Wife To Mr. Milton*. I found out a lot of things about him, heaven knows how, which have never been disproved.

INTERVIEWER

Did he inherit the constipation?

GRAVES

He was a scrivener's son. He well may have.

INTERVIEWER

How long did *I, Claudius* take to write?

GRAVES

I, Claudius and *Claudius the God* took me eight months. I had to get the job done quickly, because I was £4000 in debt. I got so close to him that I was accused of doing a lot of research that I had never done at all.

INTERVIEWER

Did you dictate any of it?

GRAVES

No. I had a typist here in the village, but I didn't dictate. If you only use the main sources and you know the period, a book writes itself.

INTERVIEWER

About how many hours per day did it take you?

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GRAVES

I don't know. It must have been seven or eight. The story came to about 250,000 words in all. I had mortgaged the house and didn't want to lose it.

INTERVIEWER

Why did you choose the historical novel?

GRAVES

Well, with that one I had noted in my diary, a year or two before, that the Roman historians—Tacitus, Suetonius and Dion Cassius but especially Tacitus—had obviously got Claudius wrong, and that one day I'd have to write a book about it. If I hadn't done so you would't be here drinking in this house.

INTERVIEWER

What did you have in mind at the end of *Claudius the God?* There's a distinct change in Claudius. One wonders what you were getting at as a novelist?

GRAVES

I didn't think I was writing a novel. I was trying to find out the truth of Claudius. And there was some strange confluent feeling between Claudius and myself. I found out that I was able to know a lot of things that happened without having any basis except that I knew they were true. It's a question of reconstructing a personality.

INTERVIEWER

There is not much direct source extant, though he wrote voluminously.

GRAVES

There's his speech to the Aeduans, his letter to the Alexandrians, and a number of records of what he said in Suetonius and elsewhere. We know now exactly what disease he suffered from: Little's disease. The whole scene is so solid, really, that you feel you knew him personally, if you're

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sympathetic with him. The poor man—only now, at last, people have begun to forget the bad press he was given by contemporary historians. And he's now regarded as one of the very few good emperors between Julius Caesar and Vespasian.

INTERVIEWER

In the end, though, he was disenchanted—

GRAVES

He saw he could do nothing. He had to give up.

INTERVIEWER

He disintegrated and became very nearly another Caligula or Tiberius...

GRAVES

Well, now—Caligula was born bad. Tiberius was a marvelous man. But too much pressure was put on him and he warned the Senate of what was going to happen. He foresaw a severe psychological breakdown. If you've always been extremely clean—always brushed your teeth, and made your bed—and you get to a point of intolerable stress, you break down and display what is called paradoxical behavior: you mess your bed, you do the most disgusting things. Tiberius had been noted for his chastity and manly virtues, and then he broke down. I now feel the greatest possible sympathy for Tiberius.

INTERVIEWER

Weren't you getting at Livy a bit in the novel as a manipulator of truth for effect?

GRAVES

It's a sort of habit in my family, you know. My granduncle was Leopold von Ranke, the so-called "father of modern history." He was always held up to me by my mother as the first modern historian who decided to tell the truth in history.

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INTERVIEWER

Did that instigate your quest, the shibboleths you've upset to the consternation of many?

GRAVES

You see there are many people who believe things of which they can't get rid. Suddenly they are faced by some strange fact—such as that God, in the Holy of Holies, had a wife. My friend Raphael Patai has worked it all out in his *Hebrew Goddess*. It's more than they can stand. But you've got to admit it.

INTERVIEWER

That God had a wife? Did you really mean that?

GRAVES

Indeed he did. It's in the Talmud. Of course the Jews had always kept it rather quiet. At first he was One—but then came the division. You've got to find the focal point. God was a male deity and the focal point was obviously a woman. He couldn't do without one.

INTERVIEWER

How many books have you published?

GRAVES

One hundred and twenty-one—but many of those are revised collections. Then I've written books for other people.

INTERVIEWER

Why have you done that?

GRAVES

Because they had something to say and they couldn't write it down.

INTERVIEWER

Have you given up writing fiction?

GRAVES

It might happen again. I doubt it, but I don't know. One never knows.

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INTERVIEWER

After writing *The Reader Over Your Shoulder* with Alan Hodge in 1942—your handbook for writers of English prose—you say that your own style changed completely. Why, or rather how?

GRAVES

Whoever thinks about the English language and tries to discover its principles, and also pulls a whole lot of writers to pieces to show how badly they write, can't afford to write badly himself. In 1959, I entirely rewrote *Goodbye To All That*—every single sentence—but no one noticed. Some said: "What a good book this is, after all. How well it's lasted." It hasn't lasted at all. It's an entirely new product. One of those computer analyses of style couldn't possibly decide that my historical novels were all written by the same hand. They're completely different in vocabulary, syntax and language-level.

INTERVIEWER

Considering this vast output and all the revision, how much time do you spend writing? Do you write everything by hand?

GRAVES

Yes. Now let me see, *Nazarene Gospel Restored* took me two years. Now that is 800 pages of close writing. Yes, it's about—two books a year for 50 years. That's not so much. I have nothing else to do. The score this year is six.

INTERVIEWER

Do you find you can remember the vast research you have collected?

GRAVES

I know where to look.

INTERVIEWER

Isn't it difficult to be here so far from libraries?

GRAVES

I have never worked in a library.

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INTERVIEWER

Where do you get all this information?

GRAVES

I don't know. It comes. I am not erudite. In the normal way of being I am not even well-read. I am simply well informed in certain areas of my interest.

INTERVIEWER

You have to know the dates of history—the spelling of the Welsh words—

GRAVES

I've got a Welsh dictionary. I've got quite a big classical library.

INTERVIEWER

Would you say the core ideas come first and then you research?

GRAVES

One has the whole vision of the thing—and then one just checks. Cause may not necessarily ordain effect; it may equally be that effect ordains cause—once one has got the whole time thing under control.

INTERVIEWER

What do you do exactly?

GRAVES

Revise the manuscript till I can't read it any longer, then get somebody to type it. Then I revise the typing. Then it's retyped again. Then there's a third typing, which is the final one. Nothing should then remain that offends the eye.

INTERVIEWER

This is for prose?

GRAVES

Yes. But that's no proof that in ten years' time it may not read badly. One doesn't know about prose at the time.

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INTERVIEWER

And poetry?

GRAVES

Sometimes you know: "This is right, this is one of the things that stands." You feel there are a certain number of poems that have got to be written. You don't know what they are, but you feel: this is one, and that is one. It is the relation between jewels and the matrix—the jewels come from the matrix, then there's the matrix to prove it. A lot of poems are matrix rather than jewels.

INTERVIEWER

What do you mean?

GRAVES

The matrix is partly jewel, partly not jewel. And lots of poems are like that. Those are the ones that usually the public likes best: ones that are not wholly jewels.

INTERVIEWER

Is that because these poems are transitional between generalized views and your personal attitude?

GRAVES

Something like that.

INTERVIEWER

More accessible?

GRAVES

Yes.

INTERVIEWER

Do you still experiment with hallucinogens?

GRAVES

I had two trips on the Mexican mushroom back in 1954 or so. None since. And never on LSD. First of all it's dangerous, and secondly ergot, from which LSD is made, is the enemy

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of mankind. Ergot is a minute black fungus that grows on rye, or did in the Middle Ages, and people who ate rye bread got manic visions, especially Germans. They now say that ergot affects the genes and might disorder the next generation. It occurs to me that this may explain the phenomenon of Nazism, a form of mass hysteria. Germans were rye-eaters, as opposed to wheat-eaters like the English. LSD reminds me of the minks that escape from mink-farms and breed in the forest and become dangerous and destructive. It has escaped from the drug factory and gets made in college laboratories.

INTERVIEWER

You have spoken of a vision of total knowledge that you once had at twelve—

GRAVES

You probably had a similar vision, and you've forgotten it. It needn't be a vision of anything; so long as it's a foretaste of Paradise. Blake had one. All poets and painters who have that extra "thing" in their work seem to have had this vision and never let it be destroyed by education. Which is all that matters.

INTERVIEWER

You've just finished a new translation of the *Rubáiyát* of Omar Khayyám. Why did you choose the *Rubáiyát*, rather than the work of a purer Sufic poet such as Rumi or Sa'adi?

GRAVES

I was invited to cooperate in the task by Omar Ali-Shah, whose family has possessed the original manuscript since A.D. 1153. That's why. I was in the hospital and very glad of the job to take my mind off hospital routine. Khayyám's original poem was written in honor of God's love, and spiced with satires against the Moslem puritans of the day. FitzGerald got it all wrong: he believed Khayyám really was a drunkard, and an unbeliever, not a man who was satirizing unbelievers. It's amazing how many millions have been fooled by FitzGerald. Most of them will hate being undeceived.

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INTERVIEWER

You have said that the critics now writing about your *Rubáiyát* fail to understand it because they are not Sufis.

GRAVES

As I said, I can take no credit for the job. I worked from a literal crib by Omar Ali-Shah, who is a Sufi. Not only a Sufi, but his family is in the direct line of descent from the Prophet—and they claim that Mohammed was a Sufi and delivered this secret doctrine to them.

INTERVIEWER

It seems to me your Khayyám is more clear and incisive intellectually, whereas FitzGerald—

GRAVES

FitzGerald, you see, was one of those Irishmen at a time when people were ashamed of being Irish and so kept it quiet. And he became a sort of dilettante Englishman. And broke with the poetic tradition of Ireland, which is one of the strongest in the world. I should think after the Persian it is the strongest.

INTERVIEWER

You are talking about the original Irish poetic tradition?

GRAVES

There is only one!

INTERVIEWER

You explained to me once that that was originally Sufi—

GRAVES

Before that it was Milesian Greek superimposed on the archaic Libyan culture of about 2500 B.C. The Milesians came to Ireland via Spain and brought with them the Ogham tradition—which is an early form of alphabet, taking us back toward the day when letters originated in the observation of flights of cranes, and so on. But Ireland always remained in

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contact with Greek-speaking Antioch and not Rome, which was important.

INTERVIEWER

Is the important thing that Ogham was pre-classical?

GRAVES

That's right. Before Plato. Before the Greeks went wrong. You know, the Jews had a saying—"of the ten measures of folly the Greeks have nine." They were all right until about the sixth century B.C. By the time of Alexander the Great they'd gone to pieces altogether.

INTERVIEWER

In what way?

GRAVES

They tried to decry myth. They tried to put in its place what we would now call scientific concepts. They tried to give it a literal explanation. Socrates jokes about myths and Horace makes fun of them. When put to it, Socrates could clarify a myth in a way that deprived it of all sense. They simply had no use for poetic thought. Logic works at a very high level in consciousness. The academic never goes to sleep logically, he always stays awake. By doing so, he deprives himself of sleep. And he misses the whole thing, you see. Sleep has seven levels, topmost of which is the poetic trance—in it you still have access to conscious thought while keeping in touch with dream... with the topmost fragments of dream... you own memory... pictorial imagery as children know it and as it was known to primitive man. No poem is worth anything unless it starts from a poetic trance, out of which you can be wakened by interruption as from a dream. In fact, it is the same thing.

INTERVIEWER

But where does this itself come from?

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GRAVES

From yourself, under the direction of the more-than-you formed by your relation with the person with whom you are in rapport at the time. If anybody were really observant he'd be able to take a poem and draw a picture of the person it was addressed to.

INTERVIEWER

In looking at the beloved do you then see yourself most clearly—as distinct from looking at yourself?

GRAVES

Yes. Otherwise it's not you.

INTERVIEWER

How do you feel about honors and laureateships? Will you accept if the laureateship is offered to you?

GRAVES

I don't answer questions about conjectures. I don't want any honors but I wouldn't so much mind being honored for writing novels which sell abroad and earn money for England. Writing poems is different. To get a C.B.E. for being a poet would be absurd. But the Government always tries to coax well-known writers into the Establishment; it makes them feel educated... I refuse doctorates, because they suggest that one has passed some sort of academic test. Accepting the Professorship of Poetry at Oxford was different—it's a free election.

INTERVIEWER

In your last and most violent lecture at Oxford you said there were no poetic standards left. It is rare for you to make generalizations of this sort. Do you feel that "pop" poetry is inconsistent with dedication to the Muse?

GRAVES

There are no standards of verse-craft left, I think I said.

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Genuine folk-songs are welcome, but why those artifical songs of protest? There are few now, if any, who go to the real root of the thing. Fewer, since Frost and Cummings died.

INTERVIEWER

What about your own poetic influences, apart from the Tudor poet Skelton and Laura Riding?

GRAVES

"Influence" is a very loose term. It sounds as though one is being dominated by someone. I never wrote anything in Laura Riding's style as far as I know. I learnt from her a general attitude to things, rather than verse-craft.

INTERVIEWER

Is it that what you get from successive incarnations of the Muse?

GRAVES

Yes, but in the form of warnings rather than instructions.

INTERVIEWER

May I ask you about the way you work? You don't have a routine, do you?

GRAVES

None. I admit only to a certain sense of priority in things. This morning for instance I got up at seven. I felt drawn to the ash pit where I burn waste paper and sieved out all the tins and things which have been mistakenly put there. Then I put the ash on the compost heap. Then I soaked the carrot patch so that I could thin it out a bit. Then I revised my "Monsters" piece.

INTERVIEWER

You write in longhand, on a sort of lectern...

GRAVES

That's because I broke my neck once. When the doctor

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asked me how, I couldn't remember until just the other day. It was when I was climbing Snowdon in 1913. I was belayed in a gully when the leader dislodged a large stone: it fell on my head and knocked me out. The other day I had almost exactly the same experience and so remembered the occasion. Now my neck is—well, I wrote a poem about it: "Broken Neck."

INTERVIEWER

Does most of your income come from royalties on your novels?

GRAVES

I don't know, really. I never study my royalty returns.

INTERVIEWER

You said you only read for information. What do you read and when do you get time?

GRAVES

I used to read at night, now I go straight to sleep. I don't read for pleasure. The other day I had to revise *The Nazarene Gospel Restored* for publication in Hungary, which meant a good deal of research.

INTERVIEWER

You said, "I foresee no change for the better in the world until everything gets worse." Well, now it *is* worse. Can we do anything about it?

GRAVES

Poets can't march in protest or do that sort of thing. I feel that it's against the rules, and pointless. If mankind wants a great big final bang, that's what it'll get. One should never protest against anything unless it's going to have an effect. None of those marches do. One should either be silent or go straight to the top. Once this village was without electricity for three months because the local system had broken down

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and the provincial company was scared of putting a pylon on the land of an old noblewoman, whose son was a Captain-General and who said that the spot was sacred to St. Catalina Tomás, the island's patron saint. I went to Madrid to see the Minister of Information and National Tourism, and told him: "The local hotels will be empty this summer for lack of electricity." He kindly informed our Civil Governor that the pylon should be put up regardless of the Saint's feelings. But it's different if one can't go to the top. I regret the war in Vietnam, but marching won't stop it, and there is no one person, like our Minister in Madrid, who can control this complex situation.

INTERVIEWER

Does this disturb you?

GRAVES

Civilization has got further and further from the so-called "natural" man, who uses all his faculties: perception, invention, improvisation. It's bound to end in the breakdown of society, and the cutting down of the human race to manageable size. That's the way things work; they always have. My hope is that a few cultural reservations will be left undisturbed. A suitable place might be certain Pacific Islands, and tracts in Siberia and Australia, so that when the present mess is over, the race of man can restore itself from these centers.

INTERVIEWER

Who will be on the reservations? Who'll decide?

GRAVES

The people who are already there. They should be left. The Melanesians, for instance and the palaeo-Siberians.

INTERVIEWER

Has your living here in Deyá isolated from what you call the modern mechanarchic civilization gradually led to what you call handcraft in your poetry?

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GRAVES

I once lived here for six years without moving out. That was in the years 1930–1936. Didn't even go to Barcelona. Apart from that, I've always made a point of traveling. One's got to go out, because one can't live wholly in oneself or wholly in the traditional past. One's got to be aware of how really nasty urban life is.

INTERVIEWER

But you take in much less by osmosis than if you were T. S. Eliot at the bank?

GRAVES

Obviously I do.

INTERVIEWER

You are constantly revising your collected poems. Why?

GRAVES

I realize from time to time that certain poems were written for the wrong reasons, and feel obliged to remove them; they give me a sick feeling. Only the few necessary poems should be kept. There's no mystery about them: if one is a poet, one eventually learns which they are. Though of course a perfect poem is impossible. Once it had been written, the world would end.

—PETER BUCKMAN
—WILLIAM FIFIELD

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Little Magazines and Other Publishing Ventures

George Wickes

In his various reminiscences about the early twenties Hemingway recalls with grim satisfaction how difficult it was to get his stories accepted. One persistent memory was associated with the rue Notre-Dame-des-Champs, where he lived when he returned to Paris from Canada in 1924 after quitting his newspaper job. In *Green Hills of Africa*, he remembers "*all of the stories back in the mail that came in through a slit in the sawmill door, with notes of rejection that would never call them stories, but always anecdotes, sketches, contes, etc. They did not want them, and we lived on poireaux and drank cahors and water.*" After the success of *The Sun Also Rises* in 1926, his stories were suddenly in demand by *Scribner's*, the *Atlantic*, *New Republic*, and *La Nouvelle Revue Française*. But before that he had his fill of being ignored by commercial publishers and magazines that paid. Edward J. O'Brien had singled him out by dedicating *The Best Short Stories of 1923* to Ernest Hemenway, but he had misspelled his name and reprinted "My Old Man," a story that might have been written by Sherwood Anderson. Scott Fitzgerald had recognized Hemingway's worth and written to Maxwell Perkins at Scribner's, "This is to tell you about a young man named Ernest Hemingway, who lives in Paris (an American), writes for the *Transatlantic Review* and has a brilliant future." He urged Perkins to "look him up right away. He's the real thing." But Perkins was slow to move, and American publishers seemed dishearteningly unresponsive to a young man in a hurry to get his stories published.

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Hemingway's experiences were typical. An unknown writer or one who was the slightest bit avant-garde had a hard time catching the eye of the popular magazines and established publishers. His only recourse was to write for literary magazines like those in which Hemingway's early stories first appeared. Hemingway was more fortunate than most. He had the backing of that great apostle of the little magazine, Ezra Pound, the foreign editor of *The Little Review*, a founder of the *Transatlantic Review*, the patron saint of *This Quarter*. When Hemingway returned to Paris, Pound introduced him to Ford Madox Ford, who put him to work as an assistant editor of *Transatlantic*. At that time Paris was the center of the nonprofit publishing industry. Besides the little magazines there was Robert McAlmon's Contact Publishing Company and William Bird's Three Mountains Press, both established in 1922. Between them they published Hemingway's first two books–pamphlets, really—which otherwise would not have appeared in print.

Hemingway had the example of Joyce to show him how fortunate he was and how easily he succeeded. Joyce, the greatest living writer to most Americans of Hemingway's generation, had to struggle all his life to get his works into print and had to be subsidized so that he could go on writing. His cause was taken up by a succession of dedicated women who were not only perceptive enough but determined that Joyce would get published regardless of obstacles. Two of them were Americans—Margaret Anderson who ran *Ulysses* serially in *The Little Review* and as a result had to fight the censors for three years, and Sylvia Beach who became a publisher with the sole purpose of bringing the book into the world. Thus *Ulysses* appeared in Paris under the imprint of Shakespeare and Company a dozen years before it could be published legally in any English-speaking country.

Publishers like Shakespeare and Company were rare, but little magazines were a common phenomenon. Most of them were ephemeral, appearing at irregular intervals for four or five issues until funds ran out. Chronically short of capital, they paid contributors little besides the satisfaction of being

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displayed before a small, intelligent audience. (*The Transatlantic Review*, *This Quarter*, and *Transition*, which had better financial backing than most, all paid thirty francs a page at a time when the franc was averaging twenty-five to the dollar; many little magazines paid nothing.) They usually published the same authors, and their editors often reappeared on one magazine after another, a circumstance which led William Carlos Williams to say that there was just one continuous little magazine under different names. *The Little Review* was an exception, lasting from 1914 to 1929, but its character changed several times during that period, depending on Margaret Anderson's changing interests as she moved from Chicago to New York to Paris.

In the twenties a number of little magazines were published in Europe, where printing was cheaper, and edited from Montparnasse, where the editors and writers were most likely to meet. Several like *Broom* and *Secession* self-consciously presented the "exile" point of view for a time, until their editors lost interest or quarreled or went home. These two, although published in Rome, Berlin, Vienna, New York—anywhere but Paris—were originally launched from Montparnasse, where their editors consorted during the early twenties: Harold Loeb, Alfred Kreymborg, Slater Brown, Gorham Munson, Matthew Josephson, and Malcolm Cowley.

During the twenties at least eight literary magazines were published by Americans in Paris. Four of them were very little indeed: *Gargoyle* (1921–22) and *The Boulevardier* (1927), both edited by Arthur Moss and Florence Gilliam; *Larus*, edited by Sherry Mangan in America with the collaboration of Virgil Thomson in Paris, 1927–28; and Harold Salemson's bilingual *Tambour*, 1929–30. Three were among the most influential: *The Little Review* which appeared more and more erratically after 1923, when Margaret Anderson moved to Paris; the *Transatlantic Review*, which lasted only one year, 1924; and *Transition*, which lasted longest in Paris, 1927–38. *This Quarter* (1925–32) was between the largest and the smallest in circulation and published some of the best writing.

The little magazines played an indispensable role in launch-

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ing new writers and spreading movements like dada and surrealism. None of the editors were infallible, and in their desire to encourage all that was new and experimental they often published inferior work. But they were zealous in the cause of literature and fought the good fight in the avant-garde. Their great hope was always to discover a new genius like Joyce and they were willing to take chances. On the whole they succeeded, for most important writers of this period first appeared in little magazines.

Hemingway is a good example. His first book published in America was *In Our Time*, a collection of stories set off by short transitional passages of factual reporting. Though it seems highly integrated, *In Our Time* was written and published piecemeal. In fact the book could be called Hemingway's collected works, 1921–25, for it contains nearly all the serious prose he completed during that period. All but four of the thirty-one individual pieces of *In Our Time* first appeared in little magazines or subsidized volumes.

Hemingway's work on the *Transatlantic Review* also helped to make his name, for during its brief existence *Transatlantic* was one of the most important literary magazines. Its editor Ford Madox Ford was an old hand, having edited *The English Review* with remarkable success before the war. Well connected in British and French literary circles, he wanted to establish an international review that would represent the best work being produced by young Americans as well, and he chose Paris as the ideal location for such an enterprise. As it turned out, the American contributors outnumbered all the others, a fact which led Ford to ruminate about the great literary movement that was getting under way in the Middle West. To Ford, an amiable mythomaniac, geographical accuracy was less important than dramatic effect, and "Middle Westishness" was a quality that could be found in Parisians or Londoners.

The Paris Review, as *Transatlantic* was originally named, borrowed the city's seal and motto (*Fluctuat nec mergitur*—It bobs up and down but does not sink), prudently limiting itself to the first word of the motto until time should prove the rest.

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Fluctuate it did from the start, beset by vicissitudes even before the first number appeared in January 1924, and although it managed to keep afloat for twelve monthly issues, it was more than once in danger of going under. Ford, as he readily admitted, was not a businessman, and everything went wrong. His chief backer, John Quinn, the New York lawyer who had defended *The Little Review* against obscenity charges for publishing *Ulysses*, was ailing and died at the end of July. Hemingway, who was left in charge while Ford went to New York to see Quinn, saved the magazine by finding another patron, Krebs Friend, a shell-shocked war veteran who had married a rich woman forty years older than himself. Friend had no talent, but his wife had hopes that writing would rehabilitate him. The three ended up bickering with Ford, who had decided to let the magazine die anyhow at the end of the year.

Hemingway, who presents an uncomplimentary portrait of Ford in *A Moveable Feast*, found him a trying person to deal with; he complained bitterly in letters to Getrude Stein, and sarcastically challenged the editor's literary tastes in the columns of *Transatlantic*. Hemingway had no patience with Ford's poses and knew he could run the magazine more efficiently himself. McAlmon confirmed this in his memoirs, saying that Ford left the editing to others. But what Hemingway regarded as megalomania was merely Ford's incurable habit of fictionalizing his own past, particularly his collaboration with Joseph Conrad and his war record; and while Ford's past was authentic enough, his embellishments and his personality irritated Hemingway. The difference between them was partly one of temperament, partly one of age, Ford being twice as old as Hemingway and an oversized walrus in appearance. But plenty of other Americans appreciated Ford: Dos Passos admired him greatly, Allen Tate respected him as "the last great European man of letters," and other poets enjoyed Ford's soirées, where they competed in writing limericks and sonnets.

For all his self-glorification, Ford was genuinely devoted to the cause of publishing new talent. Although a poor man, he put more money into *Transatlantic* than anyone else. He bore no grudges and was if anything too patient in the face of ad-

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versity. As he wrote to Gertrude Stein when Hemingway threatened to withdraw *The Making of Americans* from *Transatlantic*, claiming that she had been offered "real money" by Eliot's *Criterion*, "... I really exist as a sort of half-way house between non-publishable youth and real money—a sort of green baize swing door that everyone kicks both on entering and on leaving." Gertrude Stein, who was a shareholder as well as an author, replied that she was content: "I like the magazine and I like your editing. I am sincerely attached to both so suppose we go on as we are going."

Such squabbles were part of the history of every little magazine. Whatever their differences, Ford commended Hemingway's critical judgment when he entrusted him with the August number and only reproached him with the mildest editorial banter when Hemingway proceded to eliminate English authors, including Ford, in favor of Americans, and later when Hemingway insulted Eliot gratuitously in the supplement published on the occasion of Conrad's death. (Hemingway wrote: "It is agreed by most of the people I know that Conrad is a bad writer, just as it is agreed that T. S. Eliot is a good writer. If I knew that by grinding Mr. Eliot into a fine dry powder and sprinkling that powder over Mr. Conrad's grave Mr. Conrad would shortly appear, looking very annoyed at the forced return and commence writing I would leave for London early tomorrow morning with a sausage grinder.") In later years Ford always regarded Hemingway with avuncular indulgence—in his introduction to the Modern Library edition of *A Farewell to Arms*, for instance, and in his fictionalized memoirs about the early twenties, *It Was the Nightingale*—and liked to think of Hemingway as one of the authors he had discovered.

Actually the *Transatlantic* could claim no major discoveries, but it did much to further the cause of American writing. The first number opened with four poems by E. E. Cummings and sustained the experimental note with two of Ezra Pound's cantos; later issues included poems by Hilda Doolittle, William Carlos Williams, Natalie Barney (a shareholder, like Gertrude Stein), and Hemingway's friend Evan Shipman.

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Besides Hemingway, the young fiction writers of the Middle West included Robert McAlmon, Djuna Barnes, John Dos Passos, and Hemingway's friend Donald Ogden Stewart. Most noteworthy was the April number, with the opening chapter of *The Making of Americans* and the first selection to appear in print of a new work by Joyce, christened "Work in Progress" by Ford and destined to bear that title for fifteen years until published as *Finnegans Wake*. That number also made publishing history with the first story of the Hemingway canon to appear in any magazine.

Although Ford tried to maintain its international character, *Transatlantic* was dominated by American work, with distinctly less of British, French, and other nationalities. The magazine featured art and music as well as literature, with supplements devoted to Picasso drawings from the Gertrude Stein collection and Ezra Pound's vigorous promotion of George Antheil's musical career. The chief criticism of *Transatlantic* was that it was too heavily freighted with serials. Besides *The Making of Americans*, which ran from April through December, there were always three others running, except in the number edited by Hemingway. Ford used the magazine to serialize his own works in progress: literary criticism under the pseudonym Daniel Chaucer, part of the first volume of his great war novel, and in the later issues selections from his book about Conrad. He was an incredibly prolific writer who could have filled the entire review by himself.

Ford has described the quarters *Transatlantic* shared with the Three Mountains Press at 29 Quai d'Anjou. "We printed and published in a domed wine-vault, exceedingly old and cramped, on the Ile St. Louis with a grey view of the Seine below the Quais." Their host was William Bird, to whom Ford dedicated *No More Parades*, begun during that year. "Publisher Bird printed his books beautifully at a great old seventeenth-century press and we all took hands at pulling its immense levers about. I 'edited' in a gallery like a bird-cage at the top of the vault. It was so low that I could never stand up." Hemingway preferred to read manuscripts out on the quai. Conveniently nearby was Madame Leconte's Rendezvous

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des Mariniers discovered by Dos Passos during the war, when he rented a room upstairs.

When Ford decided to give Thursday teas for his contributors "after the time-honoured fashion of editors in Paris," the *Transatlantic Review* became a social as well as a literary enterprise. Ford liked parties and fancied himself in the role of host as well as editor encouraging the young. When the teas proved more social than literary and the Americans tended to stretch the French Thursday into an English weekend, Ford decided to change it to a Friday night dance at a *bal musette* in the rue Cardinal Lemoine, where Hemingway had lived when he first came to Paris. Both Madame Leconte's restaurant and the *bal musette* appear in *The Sun Also Rises*, as does the Nègre de Toulouse, the restaurant of Monsieur Lavigne on the Boulevard Montparnasse, where Ford and his friends had reserved tables in the back room. Burton Rascoe, who visited Paris in the latter days of the *Transatlantic*, had dinner with Ford and was taken to the *bal musette* afterward. "Hemingway was there, but he and Ford were not speaking," he reported. "After Ford had asked my wife and me and Mrs. Hemingway to sit at a table with him, Hemingway said to Mrs. Hemingway, 'Pay for your own drinks, do you hear! Don't let him [nodding toward Ford] buy you anything.' " According to Rascoe, Hemingway had angrily resigned from the *Transatlantic* and stopped speaking to Ford over his mild editorial about Hemingway's attack on Eliot.

William Bird's place on the Quai d'Anjou was, as Ford said, the center of the whole Middle Western literary movement. Not only the Three Mountains Press and the *Transatlantic Review* but the Contact Publishing Company used the obliging printer's premises. William Bird was a newspaperman who had come to Paris in 1920 as European manager of his own press service. He combined his two avocations, fine wines and fine printing, in publishing his own book, *A Practical Guide to French Wines*. He had already acquired his ancient hand press on the Ile Saint-Louis in the spring of 1922, when he met Hemingway as a fellow journalist. Bird was looking for books to print, so Hemingway introduced him to Pound,

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who undertook to commission and edit a series of six contemporary prose works, including Pound's *Indiscretions*, Ford's *Women and Men*, Williams' *The Great American Novel*, and Hemingway's *in our time*. These Bird printed slowly in limited editions—too slowly for Hemingway, who was impatient to appear in print and whose book was the last of the series, announced for 1923, but not published until March 1924. It was Bird's idea to print the title in lower case, Hemingway explained in a letter to Edmund Wilson, and since "that was all the fun he was getting out of it I thought he could go ahead and be a damn fool in his own way if it pleased him." Bird was also responsible for the lower case heading of the *transatlantic review*, but in that instance, Bird has explained, it was necessary to fit the long title on a single line. The practice was later imitated by other little magazines, notably *transition*.

Hemingway also introduced Robert McAlmon to Bird in 1922. McAlmon had married the daughter of one of England's wealthiest shipping magnates the previous year and encouraged his in-laws to distribute their patronage in Montparnasse. His mother-in-law Lady Ellerman presented a bust of Shakespeare to Sylvia Beach's bookshop and subsidized the American composer George Antheil for two years. McAlmon, who had started a little magazine called *Contact* with William Carlos Williams in Greenwich Village, now founded the Contact Publishing Company in Paris. He only published one book in 1922, his own collection of stories, *A Hasty Bunch*, the title suggested by Joyce, who was amused by McAlmon's American idiom. In 1923, when his father-in-law gave him £14,000, McAlmon became the publisher of Montparnasse; he joined forces with Bird, and engaged Darantière of Dijon, who had printed *Ulysses*, to do his Contact Editions.

During the next three years Three Mountains Press and the Contact Publishing Company brought out some thirty English and American books that would not readily have appeared in print. In 1923 McAlmon published Hemingway's first book, *Three Stories & Ten Poems*, and in 1925 "Soldier's Home" made its first appearance in the *Contact Collection of Contemporary Writers* in the company of the best "works in

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progress" of the time. In addition to works by himself and his wife Bryher, he published poems by Marsden Hartley, William Carlos Williams, and Hilda Doolittle, prose by Ezra Pound, Gertrude Stein, and Robert Coates, not to mention English writers.

Between them McAlmon and Bird published an impressive list, with *in our time*, *A Draft of XVI Cantos*, and *The Making of Americans* their most important books. Pound, who became very fond of Bird, praised his energy and generosity as well as his craftsmanship and entrusted him with the first book of his cantos, which Bird published "in a dee looks edtn," as Pound wrote in his characteristic orthography, "of UNRIVALLED magnificence." In another letter Pound commented, "My American publishers do not exist. It becomes more and more evident that the American publisher must be left out of one's calculations. Likewise English and henglish publishers. There may some day be a cheaper continental edition. One hopes that the Three Mts. and McAlmon's press in Paris will lead to some more general system of printing over here."

Three Mountains Press and Contact Publishing Company were both short-lived. Bird published his last book in 1926 and sold his press to Nancy Cunard, who then established the Hours Press, publishing among other works *A Draft of XXX Cantos* by Pound. McAlmon lost interest in publishing and was only partly responsible for the last few Contact books that appeared after 1926.

The only other important publisher to appear in Paris was Harry Crosby, who with his wife Caresse established the Black Sun Press in 1927. Crosby, who had been in the ambulance service and later in the French army as a *poilu*, returned to Paris in 1922, but lived in an altogether different world from Montparnasse. Connected through his uncle J. P. Morgan and his cousin Walter Berry with the Morgan Bank and the old Faubourg Saint-Germain of Henry James and Edith Wharton, he found both too confining, quit the bank, and started living the life of sensations celebrated by Huysmans. Crosby committed suicide in 1929, an act which impressed Malcolm Cowley as symbolic, providing a logical conclusion

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to *Exile's Return*, the story of the generation that was lost at Verdun. Harry and Caresse Crosby both wrote poetry, and in the process of having their books privately printed they developed an interest in fine editions, which led in turn to the publication of contemporary authors when they discovered that writers like Joyce and Lawrence were willing to provide manuscripts. They also published original works by Kay Boyle, Hart Crane, Eugene Jolas, Archibald MacLeish, and letters of James and Proust to Walter Berry. Caresse Crosby continued the Black Sun Press after her husband's death and in 1932 published Crosby Continental Editions, cheap paperback reprints and translations of modern works.

The *Transatlantic Review* had two worthy successors, *This Quarter* and *Transition*. *This Quarter* led a wandering career, its first three issues appearing in Paris, Milan, and Monte Carlo at the rate of one a year, 1925–27; then after a lapse of two years it returned to Montparnasse for its last three years, 1929–32. *This Quarter* was founded by Ernest Walsh, a consumptive poet who came to Paris to die amid writers he admired and managed to find a sympathetic patroness in Ethel Moorhead, a Scottish woman who had once studied painting with Whistler. The first number was dedicated to Ezra Pound "who by his creative work, his editorship of several magazines, his helpful friendship for young and unknown artists, his many and untiring efforts to win better appreciation of what is first-rate in art comes first to our mind as meriting the gratitude of this generation." Hemingway, who paints an unattractive portrait of Walsh in *A Moveable Feast*, contributed "Homage to Ezra," praising Pound as a major poet who devoted four-fifths of his energies to helping his friends. "And in the end a few of them refrain from knifing him at the first opportunity." Walsh's admiration for Pound was not reciprocated, and when Walsh died, Pound declined to write a tribute for the issue devoted to his memory. Whereupon Ethel Moorhead withdrew the original dedication and reviled Pound.

After commemorating Ernest Walsh she brought out no further issues; eventually *This Quarter* was taken over by Edward Titus, who kept a bookshop in Montparnasse and pub-

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lished books at his Black Manikin Press. Under his direction the magazine appeared regularly every quarter but except for the surrealist number edited by André Breton lacked the flair Walsh had shown in the early numbers.

Transition was the most ambitious as well as the most durable of the little magazines published abroad. Founded in 1927 by Eugene Jolas and Elliot Paul, it went through the usual metamorphoses, appearing monthly during its first year, quarterly until 1930, then more or less annually until 1938. Its editorial board changed frequently, with Robert Sage, Matthew Josephson, Harry Crosby, and James Johnson Sweeney serving at one time or another; but the driving spirit throughout was Eugene Jolas, and the magazine bore his stamp. Like Elliot Paul and Robert Sage, Jolas was a newspaperman with literary ambitions and a broad interest in the arts. He differed from them in being more European than American, having been born in New Jersey but raised in Lorraine while it was still in German hands. As a result *Transition* was the most international of the little magazines, claiming contributors from seventeen countries during the course of its first year.

Transition was also the most experimental of the little magazines. The first number opened with a selection from Joyce's "Work in Progress," which *Transition* undertook to serialize and which proved to be its proudest achievement. Eugene and Maria Jolas became loyal disciples of Joyce, and *Transition* assumed some aspects of a house organ, denouncing the piracy of *Ulysses*, celebrating Joyce's fiftieth birthday, publishing exegesis and critical theories inspired by "Work in Progress." The first number also included "An Elucidation" by Gertrude Stein, which had to be reprinted as a supplement when the printer garbled the text. Gertrude Stein contributed frequently to *Transition* until her *Autobiography* precipitated the magazine's only other supplement, *Testimony Against Gertrude Stein*. The foreign contributors were mostly surrealist painters and poets, who had already appeared as dadaists in *The Little Review* when Picabia had a hand in its editing. Surrealism occupied more and more space in *Transition*, finally swamping

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the magazine in the thirties, when it became "An International Workshop for Orphic Creation" publishing "Anamyths, Psychographs and Other Prose-Texts."

Hemingway had left Paris about the time *Transition* came into existence and had little to do with the magazine but was willing to lend his name and growing reputation. He signed the protest against the piracy of *Ulysses* and contributed a story, "Hills Like White Elephants," to one of the early numbers. He appeared in 1928 in a photograph loaned by Sylvia Beach that showed him hunting in Florida—clear evidence that he was already becoming a legendary figure. He did not contribute again until the final number when he responded to Jolas' final questionnaire, which asked, among other questions: "Have you ever felt the need for a new language to express the experiences of your night mind?" Hemingway surely had little interest in Jolas' "Inquiry into the Spirit and Language of Night," but he tried to answer with a straight face. To the question he replied: "I haven't ever felt this as would like to be able to handle day and night with same tools and believe can be done but respect anyone approaching any problem of writing with sincerity and wish them luck."

The most persistent enterprise for the encouragement of writers in Paris was Sylvia Beach's bookshop, Shakespeare and Company. Between 1919 and 1941 it was the American writers' club, where they met fellow writers, received their mail, and cashed their checks, and Sylvia Beach was their best friend, listening sympathetically to their troubles, unfailingly good-tempered and helpful. The writers in turn helped her, particularly during the depression years when there were few Americans to buy books. Then André Gide saved the shop by organizing a series of readings, mostly by French authors, but Eliot also came over from London to read his poetry in 1936.

Sylvia Beach remained in Paris through the German occupation and lived there until her death in 1962. She kept the bookstore open until one day in 1941, when a German officer wanted to buy the copy of *Finnegans Wake* on display in the window and, when she refused to sell it, threatened to confis-

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cate all her possessions. In a matter of hours Syliva Beach and her friends removed the entire contents of the shop and had its name painted over; Shakespeare and Company no longer existed. In 1944 the rue de l'Odéon was liberated by her "best customer," as he regarded himself, Ernest Hemingway. During the liberation of Paris he drove up with his hand of irregulars and stopped in front of her house calling "Sylvia!" She tells the story in *Shakespeare and Company:* "I flew downstairs; we met with a crash; he picked me up and swung me around and kissed me while people on the street and in the windows cheered." When Hemingway asked what he could do for her and Adrienne Monnier, they asked him to do something about the German snipers on the rooftops, so Hemingway led his troops up to the roof, and there was no more sniping after that. Sylvia Beach ends her book: "Hemingway and his men came down again and rode off in their jeeps—'to liberate,' according to Hemingway, 'the cellar at the Ritz.' "

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Notes on Contributors

INTERVIEW

Peter Buckman is an advisory editor of *The Paris Review*.

William Fifield's novels include *The Devil's Marchioness*, *The Sign of Taurus*, and *Matadors*.

ART

Gunter Fruhtrunk's paintings were shown at the Venice Biennale and Documenta IV in 1968.

David Hockney's work is shown in London at the Kasmin gallery.

CHRONICLE

George Wickes is a professor of English at Harvey Mudd College. "Little Magazines and Other Publishing Ventures" is a chapter from *Americans in Paris*, to be published soon by Doubleday & Co. in their Paris Review Editions.

FICTION

Keith Botsford is preparing with Saul Bellow a successor to *The Noble Savage*, a magazine they both edited in the late 50's. "A Member of the Delegation" is an early version of several entries in his fifth and forthcoming novel, *The Index*.

Gerald Jonas writes for *The New Yorker*.

Jean Marple lives in up-state New York.

Barton Midwood has published a novel, *Bodkin* (Random House).

Sarah Plimpton's fiction and translations have appeared in *The Partisan Review* and *The Paris Review*.

Mitchell Sisskind has published in *Art* & *Literature* and *Tri-Quarterly*.

Paul Spike's work has been published in the *Columbia Review*, *The Village Voice* and *Evergreen Review*.

POETRY

John Ashbery's poems in this issue will be included in *The Double Dream of Spring*, a collection that will be published in January by Dutton.

Steve Carey's first collection of poems, *Smith Going Backward*, was published in 1968 by the Cranium Press of San Francisco.

Tom Clark's poem "Air" is the title poem of his next book. A collection of poems, *Stones*, was recently published by Harper & Row.

Robert Creeley's book, *Pieces*, will be published by Scribners.

John Godfrey has published poems in *Mother* and *The World*.

Robert Harris is a student at the Writer's Workshop of the University of Iowa.

Kenneth Koch's most recent collection of poems, *Pleasures of Peace*, has been published by Grove Press.

Hilton Obenzinger is an editor of the *Columbia Review*.

Charles Plymell is the author of *Apocalypse Rose* (Dave Haselwood Books, 1966).

Ed Sanders is the author of *Poem from Jail*, *Peace Eye*, and *Fuck God in the Ass*.

Sotère Torregian's books include *Song for Woman* (Joycian Court 1969), *The Golden Palomino Bites the Clock* (Angel Hair 1967) and *The Wounded Mattress*.

Charlie Vermont is the author of *Charlie is Laughing*, published by the San Marcos Press in New Mexico.

Laurance Wieder's poems have been published in the *Columbia Review* and *The Paris Review*.

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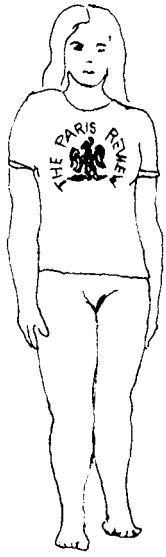

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